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Near East/South Asia Report

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5 March 1984

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UNION RELATIONS WITH EGYPT--After a friendly visit undertaken by an Egyptian petroleum workers union delegation to Baghdad, union relations between Egypt and Iraq were restored following a six year interruption. The Egyptian delegation was led by Anwar 'Ashmawi, president of the petroleum workers union in Egypt. The visit came in response to an invitation offered by the Iraqi petroleum workers union. The two parties issued a statement at the end of the visit denouncing the aggression against Lebanon, foreign intervention into its affairs, and the conspiracies aimed against the unity of the Palestinian people. [Text] [London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 39, 7 Jan 84 p 28] 9587

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NATURE, PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES OF ASALA REVIEWED

Nicosia AL-NASHRAH in Arabic No 1, 31 Oct 83 pp 16-23

[Article: "Armenia: The Armenian Secret Army: Our Operations against France Are Continuing"]

[Text] From Beirut to Paris, from Istanbul and Ankara to Amsterdam and Geneva, and from Tehran to Washington via London and most European capitals, the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia is the main preoccupation of security agencies concerned with combatting "terrorism."

Its name has become synonymous with those of organizations of "revolutionary violence" throughout the world, and talk about the Italian Red Brigades, the French "Direct Action," the Japanese Red Army and so forth must touch upon talk about this army.

The West, and its security agencies, view the army as an international instrument of terror made in Moscow and its powerful intelligence agency the KGB, while international official communism and its parties view this organization with distrust, indeed at times fear. However, whatever the status of this army might be, the certain, constant fact is that it is no longer just a handful of adventurers and people launching violence. As far as the overwhelming majority of the Armenians go, it is the passport to the homeland and a force unleashing the powers of the Armenian people.

AL-NASHRAH has prepared a complete file on the Armenian Secret Army, from its first beginnings to the present moment. It met with the senior officials in it, collected its documents, and is hereby publishing a detailed report on it, and a meeting with one of the most prominent of its leadership symbols. Of course AL-NASHRAH has committed itself not to refer to the name of this leader, in accordance with his wishes, in view of the nature of the circumstances surrounding this army.

The Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA) considers itself the practical answer to the massacres which were committed against the Armenian people in 1915, and are still being committed, although in varying degrees of flagrancy, since the Armenian people, most of whom are living as landless, dispossessed persons, are being compelled to become

assimilated within the societies in which they are located, so that their national personality is being effaced and destroyed. Therefore it was in response to this situation and the bloody massacres, or the later "white massacres," in the words of one of the officials of the army, that the Armenian Secret Army (ASALA) was born.

The establishment of the Armenian army has passed through three stages. At the beginning, it bore the name of "the Prisoner Kurken Yanikian Group." Kurken Yanikian was an Armenian fighter who singlehandedly executed two Turkish diplomats in the United States in 1973, after making a number of contacts, which did not produce any results, with a group of Armenian parties and personalities. These fruitless contacts prompted Yanikian to carry out his operation singlehandedly, cutting off contacts with all Armenian parties although that did not mean severing his ties with a group of enthusiastic young Armenians, one of whom was a founder of the army.

The reason his name was chosen as the first name for the army may be found in the significance the name possesses among the Armenian masses, which supported the operation, in addition to the role Yanikian played in "exposing and laying bare the existing Armenian parties." In addition, a group of committees has arisen in the ranks of the Armenian people to defend him, and to explain his cause within the Armenian milieu and to the world in general.

All these reasons prompted the first nucleus of the army to assume the name of "the Prisoner Kurken Yanikian Group" in 1975, following a series of contacts and preparations which had begun in 1973.

This group did not keep its name, which was for the sake of publicity by nature, for a long time. Four months after its establishment, in a quantum leap, the name was changed to a new one, that is, the "Armenian Secret Army." This leap is to be considered the second stage in the establishment of the army, and that did not last long; another change was made in the name when the word "Liberation of Armenia" was added to the army's name in September 1975. This addition was of course not fortuitous, but marked an obvious political and organizational change which declared itself through the final name, the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA).

The Declaration of Establishment

A series of contacts, which were concentrated at the beginning in the ranks of Armenian youth in particular, were the prelude to the establishment of the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia, which declared itself in an operation on 20 January 1975 against the headquarters of the World Council of Churches in Beirut, whose firm link with American Central Intelligence had been discovered. That is considered the date of the initial establishment of the army, in its initial form, the Prisoner Kurken Yanikian Group. One of the original founders of the army, the martyred Hagop Hago-pian, in his personal memoirs, justified the reason for the selection of this target as follows: "I made my decision immediately to start with an initial military operation, and my choice fell upon the World Council of Churches, whose headquarters were Beirut. The reason for this choice was that that complex was a center for the emigration of young Armenians from

the Middle East and the socialist countries to the West and America, as part of an American political plan, in cooperation with the symbols of the Dashnak, with the objective of exiling the Armenians from the Armenian homeland and establishing an Armenian state in America similar to the Soviet Socialist Republic of Armenia.

"After we had chosen the military target, a secret cell of our young people proceeded to plant explosives inside the center, which was totally destroyed, and we issued the first communique in the name of the Prisoner Kurken Yanikian Group."

The army's second operation was to blow up the Turkish tourist office in Beirut. The explosive charge was discovered and it blew up in the face of the Lebanese explosives expert.

The third operation was the destruction of the Turkish Airlines office in Beirut. These operations helped announce the birth of this organization in practical form and draw attention to it and the Armenian people's cause in general.

Although it began with military action, this organization's evaluation at that time was not optimistic, as a result of its assessment and study of the Armenian situation and the nature of actual conditions in the areas of emigration and the diaspora, which were ones of dispossession, assimilation and the melting [of the community], in addition to the dominance of the right-wing Armenian Dashnak Party, which, according to the army's assessment, greatly harmed the Armenian cause and the notion of the liberation of Armenia. This right-wing party, according to the Secret Army, had "contacts with the intelligence agencies in the areas where it was present, and throughout its history it fought the Armenian left in general, and Marxists and Communists in particular, by terrorist and fascist means, helping for example to eliminate the Armenian 'Revolutionary Youth' organization, which it eliminated in Beirut through physical liquidation 6 months after it was launched." However, the nature of the Prisoner Yanikian Group's action and the response it met kept it from being opposed, and that later allowed the group, especially after its observation of reactions among the Armenian people in general, and its young people in particular, and the positive response it received, to continue its work and consequently to change its name to the Armenian Secret Army, firmly to implant the nature of its goals and then add the final modification, where its name clearly and unequivocally became the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia, ASALA, with the significance that name held in theory, practice, extension and orientation.

The Extension

The organization's initial operations, which were carried out under the name of the Prisoner Yanikian Group, helped clarify the group's political dimensions. The first operation, the demolition of the World Council of Churches in Beirut, furthered that, first of all through the political implications it entailed then through the contact it led to with a broad class of Armenian people who had been preparing to emigrate to various areas of the world; this imposed political publicity for this organization, which was new

in nature as far as the Armenian people and its cause went, and helped broaden its scope. The national response by Armenians to the military operations that were carried out were also of help in that. The political circumstances of Beirut at that time, with the presence of the Palestinian resistance in particular, also helped first of all focus action among the masses of the Armenians in Lebanon then subsequently establish contact with the Armenian masses on the American stage, who were in touch with what was going on as a result of the nature of the first operation, which concerned groups of Armenians who had been intending to emigrate, and as a result of the personal influence of the prisoner Yanikian, whose trial in America was well attended, and to whose heroism and acts the Armenians played a large part in responding.

It was not difficult to become deployed in Syria and Palestine; in Jerusalem, for example, there is a committee bearing the name of Defense of Armenian Prisoners; this committee is linked to the army by good relations.

There remains the more important action in Turkey, where the army found an important extension among Armenian circles. Proof of that was the nature of the operations which were carried out in Turkey. As one of its prominent officials states, these, for instance the Ankara airport operation, the Istanbul bazaar operation and the operations of demolishing the transit hall in Ankara and Istanbul airports, cannot be carried out abroad, in view of their military nature.

This extension of the army was not confined to friendly and supportive surroundings but also was of an important organizational character that was reflected in its overall political and military activity.

The Organizational Structure and Form of Activity

The General Command of the People of Armenia (Van) constitutes the apex of the pyramid of the army's organizational structure. It is in effect the general conference of the organization. However, it is not a condition that the members of this command be members of the organizational or military body of the army, whereas the political bureau of the army of necessity exists within the structure of the General Command of the People of Armenia and consequently knows everything that goes on in it, while the general command does not know everything that goes on inside the circles of the army. This division may be ascribed on the one hand to security reasons and to the need to strengthen relations in terms of status and thinking with the Armenian masses and their various basic symbols which nonetheless are in agreement ultimately over the Armenian national goal, and what the army signifies as an instrument within this central goal.

The General Command of the People of Armenia (Van) is made up of all the groups and classes of the Armenian people who support the army's struggles and it consequently can enlist members of this people for the political bureau of the army, on condition that they be available to work full time. The political bureau of the Armenian army is chosen by election from all the areas of the political committees and is the body that has top responsibility for the army's action in all the areas, which in turn are administered by

central regional committees. The army's essential centrality is founded on these central regional committees. On this basis, we can define the apex of the organizational activity within the army as follows:

The General Command of the People of Armenia (Van) (conference) presents general policy on all levels between sessions. These are held in accordance with circumstances and conditions.

The political bureau of the Armenian secret army, which draws up military policy in accordance with the directives of the general command's resolutions and the nature of the circumstances and the stage.

The central committee of the central action command.

The central committees in the areas, whose activity sometimes assumes a decentralized character in accordance with need and requirements as far as the area involved goes.

The bases of the organization consist of cells which are secret by nature in their organizational or military aspects. The organizational activity of the army is based on a division between the organizational body and the military body, and as a consequence there are numerous members in the ranks of the army who have nothing to do with military activity.

In its organizational activity, the army assigns importance to publicity, the media and provocation, and concentrates on the role of "propaganda," drawing attention to two points in this regard:

First, avoiding the use of different expressions and notions among "comrades": all members must have a common language and a common understanding of the expressions used.

Second, searching in the ranks of the organization and the ranks of the masses for persons who have the potential to be personnel for propaganda or provocation, and training and refining this personnel to be innovative in one area or another.

Their conception of propaganda can be summarized in the following words: "The propagandist is the person who has the ability to explain the revolutionary organization's policies and programs and possesses facts and information which he can draw on in order totally to expose organizations and their policies in the course of offering a revolutionary alternative to them. The written word is the basic means he uses."

The provocateur is the person who has the ability to win people over, wherever they are, to the political line of the Armenian Secret Army.

The fundamental bases for revolutionary activity, according to the army's terminology, focus on the relationship with the masses, on grounds that they are the basic material and the main citadel of the revolution. The Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia, as it says, does not offer the people gifts but acts on behalf of getting the people to participate in all

its activities. The army defines its notion of democratic centralism by stating that the notion of democracy is the democracy of common active labor; it is not just discussions and elections but also the tasks assigned to combatants in order to guide the activity of the organization and its institutions within the policy and within the sound political program. Centralism does not just mean the power of ideas; it also means the power and rules of practice. This of course requires that one "not take anything lightly." In its notion of democratic centralism as an integrated process within the organization, ASALA proceeds from a question which asks, "What is the nature of democracy within the ranks of fighting men and revolutionaries who have total complete readiness to die?" It answers, "The mere meeting and agreement among revolutionaries, and the absolute trust among them, which is generated through the exercise of combat, is the peak of democracy." It goes on, "The comrades must work at the same time to develop their experience through the true revolutionary organization and to choose each member so that no Armenian Secret Army organization will shrink from any means for getting rid of the corrupt enemy when he tries to spread about doubts regarding revolutionary members or the revolutionary spirit." From this premise, the notions of the army do not justify the presence of internal disputes or blocs, and it does not call for the presence of an internal magazine for internal discussion and dialogue; rather, guidance is done through central decisions.

The characteristics of the fighting revolutionary, according to ASALA's notion, are determined by the following points:

1. He must possess absolute loyalty to the cause, the fighting masses and their revolutionary organization. Therefore, he must take part in the process of the class struggle alongside the working class and the fighting masses, and offer all his powers for the sake of the triumph of the revolution.
2. "Love of the people through realistic theory, and the need for good reputation."
3. He must be sociable.
4. He must be committed to resolutions and alienated from "liberalism and anarchism."
5. He must arm himself in total scientific vision.
6. He must feel passionate vindictiveness toward the enemies and their imperialist and reactionary allies, and what that implies, in the context of work and struggle against them in all forms.

Military Action

When it was first established, the army relied on Lebanese territory for its military training. That situation still prevails, since its independent camps are now concentrated in the areas of the al-Biqa' and Tripoli. The situation in areas where an independent military presence is not permitted

is worked around through coordination with organizations or forces that are able to carry out military activity.

The main objective of the army is defined as liberating Armenia which, they state, is occupied by the fascist Turkish regime. The military objectives are defined on the basis of that objective, which, insofar as it is carried out on Turkish territory, has the goal of:

Creating a tumult in the media among the Turkish masses.

Creating a similar tumult among Turkish officials.

Supporting the policy which calls for understanding of the Armenian cause.

Regarding the nature of their military action, they consider that that should be defined within the context of organized revolutionary violence, and therefore they deny that the label of terrorism can be applied to them and consequently deny that that label applies to the military operations they have carried out, which, according to their statement, cannot be discussed under the heading of terrorism, "because the people who want to do so must first of all study the terrorism of all the imperialist regimes, foremost among them the Turkish regime." Therefore they describe their operations as revolutionary measures against these regimes, "which can understand only that language," because political activity by itself, in isolation from military action, has only frozen the issue, or put it in abeyance, while the action that is now desired by the Armenian people requires organized revolutionary violence which is connected to the particular nature and understanding of the Armenians' way of life."

The army defines the central arena of its struggle as Turkey, first of all, then everyone who supports it or deals with it as a regime. Their recent operations against French institutions and positions took place from this premise. An important official in the army asserted that "French interests are still threatened." They thus do not grant a major role to the tumult or to foreign views. Therefore, the same official, in the course of a special interview, stated "The type of operation which they are carrying out against this sort of position will increase. It is the language which the imperialists, the enemies of the Armenian cause, understand, and which will guarantee the success of their cause."

Their insistence on the principle of revolutionary violence as an individual act, among other things, arises from the fact that there are not many subjective and objective conditions present "for waging a people's war of liberation, especially since the population density in the occupied nation, Turkey, is to be considered minor and small, and does not permit the embodiment and advancement of the notions of such people's war."

Their choice of the positions their operations adopt as a target proceeds from the importance of the center in itself, its location, the people present in it, and the extent of their connection with the direct enemy, Turkey. For example, the operation of blowing up the Turkish Airlines office at Orly Airport in France some time ago took place as part of this notion. In

this regard, the army warns against dealing with any Turkish organization, wherever it may be, considering that it is not responsible for the results.

Political Relations

Although the presence of the Palestinian resistance in areas from which the army sets forth has helped and strengthened these initiatives, mutual relations have almost been severed now. The army's political bureau decided to sever relations with the resistance at the beginning of the eighties although it is believed that relations with FATAH -- the Revolutionary Council (Abu Nidal) are still in being; this is apparent by following the central magazine of the army (ARMENIA) and the magazine FALASTIN AL-THAWRAH, which is the organ of FATAH -- the Revolutionary Council.

The army does not deny that it is related by links to all the forces that represent their people's cause. They consider new left organizations and "revolutionary violence" in Europe, such as the West German Baader Meinhof organization, the French Direct Action and the Italian Red Brigades, to be among these forces.

The army, in Lebanon, has had good relations with the Workers' League, which is headed by Mr Zahir al-Khatib, the representative in the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies. Through the league's radio service, the Voice of the Arab Revolution, they have realized "gains which manifested themselves in winning over the Armenian masses and restoring their trust in the national cause, and underlining the central struggle with the Armenian right and the official left."

Their opinion concerning the official communist parties is very harsh, since they do not consider that these parties share the positions of the left in the region. In their opinion, the revolutionary left is the one that "applies the notion of Marxist-Leninism through a theory that includes the particular aspects of the reality of life, and understands these aspects in accordance with objective and subjective circumstances, rather than waiting for foreign directives." This conception of theirs consequently applies to the official Armenian communists (the Hanshak) or the Armenians who belong to the official communist parties in the area. As far as the other strong party in the Armenian milieu (the right-wing Dashnaks) is concerned, they consider that it is their duty to combat it politically and in the media and to expose it, although the situation should not reach the level of taking military action against it.

The army considers that the Arab, Armenian, Turkish and Kurdish people must form an alliance for the sake of fighting imperialism and defeating it in the region.

The Army's Media

The army has issued a number of pamphlets and booklets which explain the status and the history of the Armenian people in brief, as well as providing summaries of the growth, development and policy of the army.

Its central media are concentrated on the magazine ARMENIA, which is its organ and is issued in Armenian, Arabic, Turkish, English and French. The army has also issued a number of appeals and posters in these languages and in others such as Persian and Kurdish.

Soviet Armenia

The army denies that it has any relationship to the Soviet authorities, and consequently it emphatically denies the rumors that circulate on its support and financing by Soviet intelligence (the KGB). However, conversely, they talk about strong bonds that link them to the people of the Soviet Republic of Armenia. They consider its creation to have been a central bastion of the Armenian people, who were dispersed over various areas of the world in spite of themselves. This presence has special importance in extensive, numerous contexts, as they say. It is also a necessity not just for the sake of the struggle for liberation and survival of the Armenian people, but also for the sake of the unity and integration of Soviet territory. The mere presence of Soviet Armenia, in itself, is a great setback "for the expansionist schemes of imperialism and reaction at every moment." The army in this regard stresses and emphasizes the special, distinctive importance of Soviet Armenia in its status as a deterrent barrier to imperialist schemes and a primary basis for struggle on the road to finding a solution to the issue of the usurped Armenian territories. This means that the condition of Soviet Armenia, in their view, is contingent on the development of the political future of the Armenian cause.

The Relationship with the Masses

The army is faced with numerous difficulties in the relationship with the Armenian masses on all levels. However, it states that these difficulties have taught it well and have prompted it to transcend them by decentralizing the stages, which have decided to pursue what they consider suitable, especially within their relations with the masses, which are showing general support for the army's struggles. This also applies, as mentioned earlier, to the masses of Soviet Armenia. The mass support for the army also manifests itself through the support of the church, which still plays an important, influential role in the circles of the Armenian people. An official of the army describes this role as sometimes acquiring "a revolutionary character with respect to the Armenian cause." In this regard it does not deny that there are religious personages in the General Command of the Armenian People (Van), which directs the army's activity. It is probable also that there are even religious figures in the army's direct command organizations.

Going back to its status with the masses, one can observe that there are many Armenian people's movements that side with the army in various areas of the world. These movements are not centrally connected to the army, although there are organizational links of various forms with them.

The Political Program

As we pointed out earlier, the General Command of the Armenian People (Van) present the main directives of action, and the leadership bodies in the army

subsequently translate these directives into practical plans. It is probable that objective and subjective circumstances play a role in changing or developing the form of this translation into practice during the period that follows and precedes the meetings of the general command. The most recent meeting of the command was held between 8 and 21 December 1982. During it, the political, military and organizational reports of the army were read out and the outlines of the method of operating were defined. The members of the higher political committee (Van) were also elected, and the tasks of the political command of the army and officials in all areas of the world were assigned. One public symbol, Comrade Vahram Vahramian, was designated official spokesman of the army, to be assisted by Alik Yanikumishian, Mahran Mahranian and Murad Armanian.

On the basis of these meetings, and the assessments of the army, an official in the army summarized the requirements for the triumph of the Armenian cause in the following points:

1. The presence of a people's army.
2. The presence of a national front containing representatives of all the revolutionary anti-colonial and anti-imperialist classes and the classes opposed to all types of repression, tyranny and abasement.
3. The presence of a revolutionary party leading and directing the people's army and leading the national front.

The army's political program may be summarized and concentrated in the following points:

1. The Armenian Secret Army is a political organization which works to mobilize the Armenian people for the struggle to liberate Armenian territory from Turkish colonialism, which is linked to international imperialism and reaction, through the pursuit of all forms of struggle.
2. The army commits itself to and is guided by the scientific revolutionary theory.
3. The army expresses the aspirations of the Armenian people, who reject the national and class servitude which the ruling class in Turkey represents.
4. Belief in revolutionary violence as a basic, principal approach, on grounds that it is the proper means for confronting the exploitation, oppression and repression of the Armenian people by Turkish colonialism, provided that the organization not neglect other methods of combat.
5. The army is part of the world revolutionary movement, and therefore is anxious to strengthen and expand the alliance with the revolutionary movement, out of the belief that the unity of world revolution is one of the requirements for the triumph of the causes of peoples and the exploited and oppressed classes.
6. The liberation of Armenian territory occupied by the Turkish authorities will be followed by a process of unification with the Armenian segments

adjacent to it and the establishment of a revolutionary democratic socialist regime.

7. The arena of the army's struggle is any spot in the world where there are Armenian people and positions, interests and representatives of the Turkish enemy are present.

8. The effort to convince the Soviet Union and the socialist countries to support the Armenian cause and back up the people in Soviet Armenia to function as revolutionary terrain for launching a long-term people's war in order to defeat Turkish colonialism.

What Has the Army Achieved?

Militarily, the Armenian Secret Army has carried out more than 200 operations against Turkish interests and the interests of those who are linked to them in various areas of the world. Through these operations, the army considers that it has succeeded in realizing the following political gains:

1. Compelling the Turkish regime to recognize the Armenian revolution and the national struggle for liberation. This is apparent from its reactions to the operations of the ASALA organization and the security measures taken, and its conduct of military terrorist operations against the Armenian people.
2. Gaining international recognition of the Armenian revolution among other fighting revolutionary peoples.
3. Revolutionary alliances with the Kurdish, Turkish, international revolutionary and progressive peoples and forces.
4. Spreading about the Armenian struggle in lands of emigration.
5. Proving to the Armenian people that it is possible to realize numerous national gains through persistence and the ability to sacrifice.
6. Separating the true friends and enemies of the Armenian people.
7. Making a class differentiation within Armenian society. This differentiation in any event will continue to be contingent on the circumstances of the Armenians in every area where they are to be found.

The Army's Human Losses

In 1979, five members of the army were killed in East Beirut.

One army member died from his wounds.

Two were executed by Khomeyni's regime in Iran.

A member was killed in The Netherlands by Turkish "agents" in a Turkish left-wing party.

A member was killed in Athens.

A member was killed in Lebanon by a rightwing group believed to be the Dashnaks.

A member was killed in Lebanon at a barrier separating east and west Beirut.

Twenty-two members were killed in the course of the recent Turkish invasion of northern Iraq (1983).

The hero of the Ankara airport operation was killed and another hero of the operation was executed by the Turkish regime after a show trial.

Two members of the central committee were assassinated in the al-Biqa' by Turkish "agents" (1983).

Six members were executed after volunteering to fight with the Iranian army in the Iraqi-Iranian war.

Thus the number of army people killed comes to 45, approximately half during the Turkish invasion of northern Iraq by agreement of the Iraqi government.

Prisoners from the Army

The prisoners from the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia can be broken down by the following figures and countries:

One prisoner in Britain.

Three prisoners in America.

Three prisoners in Sweden.

Sixty-seven prisoners in Iran.

One prisoner in Turkey.

Six prisoners in France.

One prisoner in Switzerland.

Thus the number of prisoners totals 82, about 82 percent of whom are in Iran alone.

Indications: A Broad Armenian Base

The telegrams and statements of condemnation and solidarity which the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia received in the wake of the killing of two members of its central committee in the al-Biqa', Lebanon, indicate the importance which this organization possesses in the ranks of the Armenians in general and the extent to which it has infiltrated into Armenian circles throughout the world.

A telegram of condemnation and solidarity was received from seven Armenian organizations which pursue the method of "armed struggle" and a number of telegrams of support from organizations and movements supporting it in various areas of the world.

The seven armed Armenian organizations which signed the statement of condemnation and solidarity are:

The Organization for the Liberation of Armenia.

The 13 October Organization.

The 9 June Organization.

The World Organization of Vengeance.

The 15 Organization, Switzerland.

The Orly Organization.

The September Organization, France.

Some organizations, authorities and movements supporting the Armenian Secret Army can be identified from statements bearing signatures, such as:

The Federation of Armenian Women, Founding Board.

Popular and political organizations in America.

The Secret Army's partisans in West Germany.

The partisans of the Armenian Secret Army in Italy.

The partisans of the Armenian Secret Army in France.

The Armenian People's Movement in Cyprus.

The Armenian People's Movement in Greece.

The people's movement in support of the Armenian Secret Army in Australia.

In addition to the Armenian authorities and organizations supporting the Armenian Secret Army, a statement of condemnation of the assassination was signed by many Arab and Middle Eastern political organizations, parties and political movements, which indicates the strong ties which link the Armenian Secret Army with many Arab and Middle Eastern political forces. Among these forces are:

The People's Front in Bahrain.

The Front of the Palestinian People's Struggle.

The Office of the People's Front for the Liberation of Oman.
 The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine.
 The Office of the Democratic Front for the Salvation of Somalia.
 The Jordanian Revolutionary People's Party.
 The Kurdistan Democratic Party.
 The Arab Socialist Labor Party in the Arabian Peninsula.
 The Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, Regional Command.
 The League of Workers (Lebanon).
 The Kurdish Socialist Party.
 The Federation of Iraqi Democrats.
 The People's Front for the Liberation of Palestine.
 The People's Front for the Liberation of Palestine, General Command.
 The Kurdish National Federation.
 The Palestinian National Liberation Movement, Revolutionary Council.
 The Arab Socialist Labor Party.
 The Assassination of Two Members of the Army's Central Committee

In the middle of last July, two members of the central committee of the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia were killed in the al-Biq'a', Lebanon. This operation, whose perpetrators were unknown at the time, was a surprise to many opposition political circles and opened the dossier to an investigation which brought forth startling information.

The Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia broadcast the official account of the assassination in a statement it issued on this occasion. This statement noted "In view of the fact that the leadership of our organization was located abroad, and by virtue of our seminal relations with revolutionary movements in the Middle East area, our organization chose two members of the central committee to perform the central tasks in all levels in the Middle East region."

The statement went on to say, "On 17 July 1983 we were surprised when a contact was made with us through the organization, an agency that is totally separate from the central body of our organization, whose connection is only with the two abovementioned central members of our organization in the region. The person making the contact was the first deputy commander of our camp in the al-Biq'a', who informed us that he had learned through a Turkish

comrade in the Movement for the Liberation of Turkey and Northern Kurdistan (Qaratlush) that a group of fighting men in the Front for the Palestinian People's Struggle had broken into our camp and proceeded to arrest all the personnel present there, including a member of the central committee.

"At that time, we made contacts with comrades in the center of the Front for the Struggle directly from abroad. They categorically denied the report and informed us that the personnel in our camp had been moved to a site which they did not know about."

The Armenian Army statement went on to say, "In the face of the assertions by the comrades in the Front for the Struggle and in the face of the insistence by the deputy commander of our camp (whose plot we discovered later) that the Front for the Struggle had arrested our personnel, one of the members of the political bureau of our organization went to the area to learn the fact of the matter. As soon as the member of the political bureau arrived, he discovered the conspiracy by the deputy commander of the camp, and the nature of his slander against the Front for the Struggle became confirmed to us. In 24 hours our organization's security agency managed to arrest the deputy commander of the camp and another suspect belonging to our organization, whose full participation in the conspiracy subsequently became apparent in the course of the investigations."

The army statement disclosed the details and goals of the execution of the assassination, stating, "After the investigation, the threads of the conspiracy were discovered, since they confessed that they had carried out orders of two other members of our organization in our camp, since the deputy commander of the camp had been made into an official before one of the personnel in the camp. We also acknowledge that an official of the Turks' camp (Qaratlush) had prior knowledge of the conspiracy and was in total agreement with the principal accused person on the planning of the operation to liquidate two leaders from ASALA under the pretext of eliminating the extremist left-wing leadership of ASALA. The Turks had also promised the traitors, in exchange for this treatment, to give them political support in the context of the Armenian cause.

"The two arrested persons divulged the names of the heads of the conspiracy, who were Turks from Qaratlush known as Khalid, the person in charge of the Turkish camp, a Turk of Kurdish origins, and Hasan, a Turkish member."

In addition, in another statement, the army declared that it had carried out the death sentence against the "two agents" who had taken part in the assassination, Aram Vartanian (Abu Ilyas) and Karlin Ananian, who had succeeded in infiltrating into the organization.

A Leader of the Armenian Army to AL-NASHRAH: We Will Follow up on the Execution of Operations Similar to That in Orly Airport

To shed further light on the official positions of the Armenian Secret Army, AL-NASHRAH met with one of its most prominent officials in an official, responsible capacity in one of the army's military bases and held this conversation, whose text follows, with him.

AL-NASHRAH: Has the departure of the Palestinian revolution from Beirut had an effect on your military situation? What are the dimensions of this effect?

The Armenian official: The departure of the Palestinian revolution from Beirut has not had any negative effect at all on our military conditions. Indeed, the opposite is the case, since our military operations have increased, as has been observed by everyone who is following up on the news of our revolutionary progress.

The departure of the Palestinian revolution has had a political effect with respect not just to us but to all revolutionary forces, Arab and international. This effect is manifest by its absence from the democratic political stage of which Beirut and Lebanon and general had been a center, combining all revolutionary movements, as a consequence of which Beirut was a democratic podium that highlighted the people's causes through the various forms of these movements' struggle. Beirut turned into an important weapon in the hands of the revolutionaries and imperialism felt the extent of its gravity and mobilized all its efforts to liquidate it through its advance base, Israel, through coordination with the North Atlantic Pact, in which the fascist Turkish regime plays a great role, in coordination with the pillars of imperialism in the region, and through collusion with right-wing Palestinian leaders and some leaders who are considered to belong to the nationalist ranks in Lebanon. It has succeeded in this, and this is where the effect lies.

Our measures for coping with these new conditions have been focused on escalating military action. Here I am anxious to state that the Armenian army has not left Beirut, with our masses or our forces, since the situation has been restricted to the departure of some well-known political figures. This of course does not mean that we have not lost a political center.

AL-NASHRAH: On the basis of this statement, what is the nature of your relations with the Palestinian revolution, and what are the limits of these relations?

The Armenian official: The talk about the overall relationship cannot be restricted to an answer to this question. A preliminary observation is necessary, which is that the last 60 years did not witness any relationship between any Armenian revolutionary force and any Arab revolutionary force, because the Armenian revolutionary force was absent during these years. As to the period of the recent past, we can summarize our relationship with the resistance in the course of that by talking about two periods which witnessed two different patterns of relations. Before the Armenian Secret Army was established, we had experience with the Palestinian revolution through our actual participation with it in the military and political contexts, within the forces of the Palestinian revolution, and I can state, concerning this stage, that it was successful and fruitful.

The second stage came after our departure from the resistance and the formation of the Armenian Army organization. During this stage, the nature of the relationship with the resistance shifted from an organic one, from the

position of everyday action and sacrifice and production on behalf of the Palestinian cause, to one of alliance in which action on the army's part was concentrated on articulating the tragedy of the Armenian people and consequently on establishing the Armenian cause and making the Palestinian people understand, through their revolutionary organizations, that there was an Armenian people with a cause, as is the case with the Palestinian people.

The relationship of our alliance lasted only 6 years, since our relationship with the resistance in general was severed in 1980 by a central political decree of the ASALA command because of the regional nature of the Palestinian movements and the failure to translate their revolutionary maturity into action.

AL-NASHRAH: Did this decree have any bearing on any of the revolution's positions regarding the nature of your operations?

The Armenian official: Of course not.

AL-NASHRAH: What about the military support the Palestinian revolution is offering you?

The Armenian official: The army has not received any support from the forces of the Palestinian revolution.

AL-NASHRAH: Do you and the Palestinian revolution have any stands in common, especially as far as the Zionist entity goes?

The Armenian official: Of course. We consider that the Zionist organizations are enemy targets, but they do not now figure among our central targets, and we leave the responsibility of striking out at them to the Palestinian revolution and support its vanguard position in that struggle.

AL-NASHRAH: Let us move over to another aspect. After the Orly Airport action which you carried out, much controversy was raised on your position regarding military action. Talk circulated to the effect that you had embraced the logic of terrorism. What is your response?

The Armenian official: There is no doubt that the Orly Airport operation heads the list of the revolutionary operations our revolutionary groups have carried out. The talk that has been raised by the imperialist and Western press has clearly shown the interest in the Armenian cause. This can be ascribed to our insistence on embracing our cause through the forms of combat that we consider appropriate.

They have described us as terrorists, which proves the political losses of the Western camp as far as the Armenian cause and our ability to underline it go. Therefore, the distortion of public opinion has become an imperialist weapon, prompting imperialists to adopt incorrect positions against people's causes by concentrating on the expression "terrorism" by which they refer to our revolutionary struggles. We do not engage in terrorism; we engage in revolutionary acts.

They describe us as terrorists. All right, but then one must ask, why weren't we terrorists 5 years ago? Why didn't they say that [then]? Now, because our cause has started to interact with others and assume its desired magnitude, the distortion campaigns have started.

If we go back before the Orly stage, will we be non-terrorists as far as they are concerned? Are they ready to discuss our cause and recognize it?

AL-NASHRAH: Do you believe that this form of operation can contribute to your struggle to liberate Armenia?

The Armenian official: Of course. The execution of this sort of operation supports our point of view and establishes our political policy, which we have embraced in our struggle to liberate our nation. This type of operation, which we consider heads the list of our activity, constitutes a response to the fascist practices of the Turkish military regime which have reached their peak and those of its allies in the Western camp, as embodied in coordination, cooperation, repression, restrictions, and the arrests of our people who have been driven to exile in various areas of the world.

The cruelty of our response matches the cruelty of the fascist measures which have been and are being taken against our people, and are perhaps a little less than them.

AL-NASHRAH: Does this mean that you will continue to carry out this sort of operation? If that is so, could we identify the targets which will be hit by you?

The Armenian official: Our pursuit of this sort of pattern of operations is linked to the behavior of the Western regimes and the fascist Turkish military regime. As far as identifying targets goes, all organizations and locations belonging to the imperialist regimes will be targets of our revolutionaries.

AL-NASHRAH: However, innocent people may sometimes be killed.

The Armenian official: For some years we have been urging public opinion to stay away from organizations belonging to the fascist Turkish regime and consequently public opinion must realize and understand our warnings, because we are people with a cause. Therefore, it is not possible to abandon the pursuit of political and military struggles for the sake of some innocent people.

At Orly Airport, our target was the Turkish Airlines organization. That is one of the agencies of the fascist regime. The people who were struck were dealing with that agency; they must realize that there is a Turkish-Armenian struggle underway and consequently they must stay outside the arena of this struggle. They must not be deceived; this is an actual fact. The other fact is that we have lost a million and a half martyrs. Weren't they innocent people? Conversely, France arrested 150 Armenians after the operation, of whom they kept five persons afterwards; consequently, 145 innocent persons were involved in the repression. Where are the standards which must be observed?

We repeat our warning here: everyone must stay away from Turkish organizations and must avoid dealing with them.

AL-NASHRAH: What are the Armenian people's reactions to this sort of operation?

The Armenian official: The Armenian people side with us and support our struggle, including this sort of operation. Whether there are some people who are opposed, we must not forget that some of the Armenian people have assimilated into Western societies and therefore are among the elements that are benefiting from them, and we are not surprised by their arguments, as an interested class.

AL-NASHRAH: What about your relationship with the people of Soviet Armenia?

The Armenian official: We have no relationship with the government of Soviet Armenia. Rather, our normal relations are with the masses of Soviet Armenia, which are relations of the members of a single nation. The Armenian people certainly sympathize with us on all levels, not just on the level of the Armenian cause but even on the level of the Palestinian cause as well.

AL-NASHRAH: And with the Soviet government?

The Armenian official: We have no relations with the Soviet Union. That does not mean that our position toward it is negative or hostile.

AL-NASHRAH: It is said that some of your military activity is done in coordination with Iran. What about that?

The Armenian official: The purpose in everything that is said by certain bodies concerning our coordination with the Iranian government is to defame the existing regime in Iran by indirect means, by circulating rumors to avoid getting into a direct confrontation with it.

Once again, I assert that we have no relationship with Iran. The proof is that close to 80 of our people who are partisans of our organization are prisoners in Iran, and in addition the Iranian regime ventured to execute two of our fighting men in Tehran in 1981.

AL-NASHRAH: What about your relations with the forces of the new left?

The Armenian official: We have relations with all forces which represent their people's cause.

AL-NASHRAH: Do you consider that organizations such as the Direct Approach in France, Baader Meinhof in West Germany and the Red Brigades in Italy, for instance, are among these forces?

The Armenian official: Even if these organizations do not represent their people's cause, they represent a class of the oppressed people, and we defend them.

AL-NASHRAH: Could you specify for us accurately the basic theaters of your military action?

The Armenian official: The central theater is Turkey, then everyone who supports that regime.

AL-NASHRAH: What about France?

The Armenian official: France is one of the theaters against which we are engaged in struggling. It will continue to be a target as a result of its fascist and terrorist practices against the Armenian cause.

AL-NASHRAH: Is your activity against the French authorities in France itself alone, or does it extend to include France's interests abroad also?

The Armenian official: French interests are at risk wherever they are. The proof is the blowing up of the France Bank in Beirut, and the strike against the French forces present in Beirut in the context of the multinational forces.

AL-NASHRAH: Wouldn't it be better, as far as your cause is concerned, if your activity in these theaters were concentrated in the political context and not on military violence?

The Armenian official: Political activity with imperialist countries is only a step backward, if it is confined to that. This struggle must be backed by military action (organized revolutionary violence) connected to the particular nature of the stage on which this activity is taking place.

AL-NASHRAH: How would you define your military objectives?

The Armenian official: By defining the nature of the location, according to the people who are there, and the nature of their link with the direct enemy (Turkey). Our struggle with this regime will not be confined to a specific area; it is in the context of this notion that the Orly Airport operation took place.

AL-NASHRAH: Why don't you concentrate your military activity on Armenia, Turkey, in line with the notion of people's war of liberation, for example, instead of the method you are engaging in now?

The Armenian official: There is no population concentration in the occupied territories for engaging in a people's war of liberation.

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GUESSOUS DISCUSSES INDUSTRIAL, INVESTMENT POLICIES

Casablanca LA VIE ECONOMIQUE in French 27 Jan 84 p 8

[Interview with Azeddine Guessous, minister of commerce, industry and tourism, by Marcel Herzog and Mohamed El Amine Palamino; date and place not given]

[Text] Last week, Azeddine Guessous, minister of commerce, industry and tourism, answered a series of questions concerning foreign trade and commerce.

We are publishing the continuation of that interview, devoted this week to industrial policy.

[Question] During a trip to Germany, several persons with whom we spoke indicated that they encountered many difficulties in carrying out investment projects in Morocco. However, they had no end of praise for the system applied in Tunisia. Would it not be interesting to examine that system and, if need be, apply it in Morocco?

[Answer] The comparison should be made at three different levels: 1) pre-conditions for investment (system of approval, and so on); 2) the degree of openness to foreign investments; and 3) whether or not there is centralization of investment procedures and the granting of benefits.

With respect to Morocco, the modulation of advantages provided by the investment code on industrial investments took several goals into consideration, mainly: 1) making the procedure for approval and the nature of advantages offered to national and foreign investors clearer; 2) eliminating all discrimination with respect to the source of capital; 3) guaranteeing the automatic transfer of capital dividends and especially the appreciation for foreign investors; and 4) encouraging export industries that create jobs through even more favorable treatment with respect to import duties on equipment and machinery.

Furthermore, the completion of an investment file does not exceed one month and requires a single signature, that of the Ministry of Industry. That signature (the sign of approval) means that other ministries are required to apply the provisions of the code. The benefits of the advantages of the code are therefore automatic.

We also try to develop a system of integrated aid to the national and foreign investor through the establishment of an orientation and information unit within the Directorate of Industry, the development of assistance and promotion through the Office of Industrial Development, easier credit to finance industrial projects and the establishment of industrial zones.

Finally, let us say that despite the current crisis in the world economy, it is comforting to note that the new investment code has given rise to definite interest on the part of national and foreign investors. This is scarcely surprising when one realizes that, in addition to an interesting legal framework, as we have just seen, Morocco offers considerable assets, whether it be a matter of its natural resources, geographic location, skilled labor, its domestic market and its natural aptitude to serve as a relay point for the exportation of co-negotiated products to third countries.

The fact remains that the best measure of the systems of incentives is the volume of private investments made in the different countries compared. I can tell you without fear of error that the figure for Morocco far exceeds what was done in the countries named in the sectors of industry, tourism, housing, handicrafts and fishing.

[Question] Can you draw up a balance sheet of the new industrial zones set up in different cities in the country?

[Answer] The national program of industrial zones can quite rightly be considered as a confirmation of the priority given to the industrial sector, based on the role as a leader it plays in economic and social development through the development of production and productivity, the upgrading of natural resources and the creation of jobs. However, it has been noted that the efforts made in this area have not always yielded the anticipated results, mainly because of the lack of basic infrastructure.

The national program of industrial zones has therefore remedied that deficiency through: the creation of a suitable environment; the provision of totally equipped land to investors; the drafting of a national strategy for the distribution of industrial land; standardization of equipment norms in order to rationalize the use of land; and the strengthening of all objectives through a price policy based on the gradual reduction of the cost of land as one moves away from the "attractive" centers.

It should be pointed out that the government bears part of the cost of the land in zones 3 and 4.

At the present time, one can say that the national program is quite advanced because nine zones have already been set up: Tetouan, Sale, Khemisset, Taza, Oujda, Bouznika, Settat Nador and Sefrou, while nine more are being set up: Fes, El Jadida, El Kalaa, Ourzazate, Beni-Mellal, Ben M'Sik (Casablanca), Marrakech (CIPIA [expansion unknown]), Chefchaouen, Tiznit, Agadir and Ait Melloul. The rest of the zones are being studied.

[Question] The capital goods zones complain of sometimes being sacrificed in the "turnkey" transactions concluded with foreign enterprises. Is it possible to assure local industries of a minimum in all transactions of this type?

[Answer] The participation of local enterprises in the sector of the metallic, mechanical and electrical industries in the completion of major projects such as phosphate processing units, sugar mills, cementworks, and so on, is actually a very important subject that deserves our attention.

However, we must first of all make a few general observations:

The manufacture of capital goods in our country is not yet developed and naturally, the goal is for the completion of the major projects just mentioned to pull along their development.

The current production capacity of our enterprises cannot easily face the simultaneous completion of several big projects.

These big projects require extensive financing which the big foreign complexes that win the contracts can mobilize, in agreement and cooperation with their government.

Until recent years, there were practically no local engineering firms, which are an indispensable driving link between the project foreman and the suppliers of equipment.

Foreign builders of capital goods which have the technology do not like to furnish the plans and other elements needed for the local manufacture of some of this equipment.

These conditions mean that some "turnkey" plants or the manufacture of certain elements of those plants have slipped out of the hands of national equipment manufacturers.

As far as they are concerned, the government has already initiated action to encourage the participation of local industry in the completion of major projects. One might mention the following:

National preference: National preference is required in the specifications of major projects. For example, it is automatically prescribed for the proposed sugar mills launched by the ministry. This measure joins another provided by the code relating to the exclusion from the code advantages (exemption from customs duties) of a list of goods manufactured in Morocco, which amounts to substantial protection.

Engineering consulting firms: The AGA Engineering Firm was set up, an engineering consulting firm specializing in the agro-food domain. The goal is to move from the turnkey formula to engineering, a formula that makes increased participation of local industry possible.

Financing: A system of medium-range, rediscountable supplier's credit has been set up to make it possible for the national capital goods industry present financing for major projects and consequently, be able to participate in their completion.

The very recent establishment, with UNDP aid, of the foundry laboratory.

[Question] The last question, Mr Minister: Is it possible to define the government's industrialization policy? Are we moving toward the search for profitability in preference to sustained industrialization through tariff or quota protection?

[Answer] Since the 1960's, the importance of the industrial sector to the economy has been materialized through the adaptation and completion of sectorial plans (sugar and cement plans, the processing of ores, and so on), through the establishment of specialized promotional organizations and the implementation of incentives for the industrial sector. The government has itself been the promoter and investor in many fields.

The industrial policy followed to date in the sector of the processing industries has led to: an uneven development of the different branches (consumer goods to the detriment of basic products and capital goods); production essentially aimed at an overprotected domestic market and very weak, almost non-existent, participation in exports; distortions linked to the lack of coherence in the application of measures of incentives (economic systems, protection, code, and so on), which have made the integration of the branches of industry difficult, if not impossible.

The imperatives of growth and the persistent deficit in the budget and current accounts have made it necessary to resort to incentive measures. They include: 1) an improvement in tariff systems and other basic legislation expressing the application of the industrial policy in the field (law of integration-compensation); 2) the adoption of a coherent protection policy aimed at priority sectors but also at building a competitive industry internationally. Priorities are set up. 3) the restoration, with respect to the price policy, of the principle of truth in pricing, first of all with respect to basic "inputs" -- that is, essentially the rates for public services. Next, there will be control of prices for industrial products, which should be limited to "strategic" products, with prices being unfrozen where conditions for competition exist. The price policy must move toward a liberalization that goes hand in hand with the creation of conditions of competition.

In general, government intervention should be limited: to taking measures that will eliminate obstacles to manufacturers, such as excessive prices for some materials or services; encouraging the harmonious development of the different branches (inter-branch integration and trade); setting up suitable infrastructures.

That is the task the Ministry of Industry has set for itself.

LEGALIZATION OF ISLAMIC TENDENCY MOVEMENT DEBATED

Injustice of Exclusion

Tunis LE MACHREB in French No 81, 10 Dec 83 pp 10-11

[Editorial by Omar S'Habou: "Does the MTI Have the Right To Be Legalized?"]

[Text] Does the MTI [Islamic Tendency Movement] have the right to be legalized? That is the question that was posed with particular acuteness following the legalization of the MDS [Movement of Socialist Democrats] and the MUP [Popular Unity Movement]. The MTI is a separate case, the only candidate for legalization whose program is religious in essence and whose ambition, as formulated in its statement upon institution in June 1981, is "to adopt the overall concept of Islam and adopt political action far from secularity." The specificity of the MTI case therefore stems from the fact that it is a movement that introduces a metaphysical element into a political debate and that rejects secularity in a republic that does not.

We deemed it essential for the principal political movements in the country to speak out clearly on this matter. They responded. In the pages that follow, their answers contain nuances, differences and questions which, however cautious they may be, nevertheless reveal the depth of the debate arising out of this question within the movements themselves and between them. Obviously, it was a question that deserved to be asked.

Like all Tunisians concerned, I have reflected on this question and tried to answer it. I admit that it is difficult. Naturally, it is easy to answer it in the absolute. Since democracy is indivisible, all those who intend to work democratically for the success of their political concepts must have the right to do so. But there must be a precise idea of the identity of the candidate for leadership of the nation. However -- and I am entitled to say this, being on friendly terms with the principal leaders of the MTI -- the ideological identity of the MTI is not yet clear. Whatever the case, it deserves to be clarified. It is probably because it is not as clear as the seriousness of the debate requires that it results in too much controversy, even concern, on the part of some, not to say outright rejection on the part of others.

Nevertheless, important questions remain unanswered:

According to the current constitution, the Tunisian republican government is inspired by Islam and organized in a secular manner, a secular government being one rejecting the identification of the state with religion and being founded on the identification of the state with law. To a certain extent, the Destourian government managed by osmosis. By way of example, if the constitutional text requires that the president of the republic be Islamic, it does so because of the fact that the overwhelming majority of the Tunisians are Muslims, not out of any theocratic motivation. The same text does not stipulate that the members of the government must also be Islamic. The first government after independence even had one Jewish minister. Likewise, while the preamble to the constitution stipulates that the state religion is Islam, it nevertheless protects freedom of religion. With respect to the social laws, one observes the same concern for Islamic-secular harmony. The divorce procedure is civil but the law on inheritance Islamic. The question that poses is therefore whether the MTI agrees to insert its political action into such a republic? What institutional and constitutional reforms does it intend to introduce in order to succeed in reconciling the proposed Islamic government it does not conceal it wishes to bring about and the right to religious and political differences?

How can an Islamic government, being by definition the holder of divine and therefore absolute truth, accommodate democratic institutions that presume differences and alternance of power?

In other words, what is its concept of a republican state?

Given the current state of MTI texts, we have only rather ambivalent elements with which to respond.

The same is true of economic doctrine.

Among the objectives which the MTI has officially chosen is that of rebuilding economic life in the light of the Islamic principle: "From each according to his effort; to each according to his need." How? All ideologies, in the final analysis, converge on that goal, but none has presented the practical formulas for achieving it. That includes the MTI.

One preliminary condition does result from all this, however. This grave, serious, decisive debate could not be conducted, amidst calm and responsibility, as long as the MTI leaders remain deprived of their freedom. The debate is unequal and unjust. One cannot ask them for answers when they themselves are prevented from organizing their own debate.

At a time when a constitution to organize political life is being drafted, it is important to remind the lawmakers that that law must be the expression of a consensus. Such a consensus cannot be real without the participation of MTI leaders in reflection. And in order for them to be able to participate, they must be free.

The political movements now have the floor. Let us read what they have to say.

Responses of Political Movements

Tunis LE MAGHREB in French No 81, 10 Dec 83 pp 12-16

[Text] With the exception of the MDS, which asked us to refer to previous statements by Ahmed Mestiri on this matter, all the other political movements did respond.

We shall be content today with printing them in extenso, leaving it up to our readers to freely draw their own conclusions.

Next week, we shall analyze the agreements and disagreements of the movements on this question.

Naturally, our readers are welcome to participate in this debate.

Tunisian Communist Party: Mohamed Harmel

Logically enough, pluralism implies the recognition of all political movements really existing. They consequently have the right to legal existence.

For the MTI, what is urgent today is first of all the end of all repressive measures and the release of all imprisoned leaders and members.

This normalization which we have always demanded will enable them to eliminate all ambiguity concerning the status and characteristics of their movement and to clearly state (as they have already begun to do in certain statements) that they are not the spokesmen of Islam, but a political movement. For us, in fact, there could not be in an Islamic country a party having the privilege and claim of being the emanation or embodiment of Islam. However, a political party that would be the expression of a particular view, including with respect to religion, of which it would have its own interpretation, and that would be the heir of an ideological tradition with its historic roots in our country, such a party can have its rightful place and consequently, its legal space within the framework of pluralism and democratic rules.

Popular Unity Movement: Brahim Hayder, coordinator of the MUP Political Bureau

The Islamic Tendency Movement exists. It is part of the political reality of our country. Consequently, the question asked is senseless because the legalization of the MTI automatically stems from Article 8 of the constitution. If it is still posed, it is because the law of application of Article 8 is unconstitutional. Instead of being simply regulatory, it has done away with the freedom of association, making it subordinate to the arbitrary and partisan authorization of the minister of interior.

Since the MTI has not yet published a political, economic, social and cultural program, it is difficult to have a precise and early idea or to make a judgment about the fundamental orientations of the movement.

This being the case, no one has the right to question Tunisians' right to join together under the banner of Islam, first of all because such grouping in no way deprives other Tunisians of their rights and duties as Muslims, rights and duties as they conceive of them themselves. Second, it is not rare to see political parties throughout the world affiliated with religions and without such affiliation causing any problems.

In this connection, the government's argument that there cannot be an Islamic party in Tunisia because that would mean that other Tunisians would be considered as non-Muslims is inadmissible. One could even respond that if the party in power is called "Destourian," meaning "constitutionalist," this in no way means that the other parties reject the principle of the country's constitution, especially since the party in power constantly violates the spirit and letter of the constitution and the other parties ceaselessly refer to it.

Movement of Socialist Democrats: Ahmed Mestiri

In the interview he recently granted to the weekly JEUNE AFRIQUE and in answer to the question of whether he favors the existence of a party based on religion, Ahmed Mestiri, secretary general of the MDS, said the following:

I agree that one can say: "I am a Muslim and that is my conception of economics or of politics." That is part of the freedom of opinion. But to say: "That is religion and anyone who does not agree with me is an unbeliever" is inadmissible. Sunnite Islam has no church; it belongs to everyone. Whatever comes under the heading of public freedoms must be accepted. Whatever goes beyond those limits is unacceptable and the same thing as fanaticism. Those who claim affinity with Islam have every right to organize and participate in the political arena, but they go beyond their rights when they try to impose their concepts on the country.

There are in the Islamic trend -- that is what we are discussing -- people who accept democratic rules. Unfortunately, there are also those who have chosen illegal action and violence to impose their point of view.

[Question] Is that not partially due to the ban on political parties?

[Answer] All those who accept democratic interplay must be allowed to manifest themselves publicly and the others must be prevented from acting. To make an amalgam of the two helps the partisans of violence. We disapprove of the government's position on the Islamic Tendency Movement.

Socialist Rally: "Yes."

We wish to state that the Socialist Rally has resolutely pledged to respect and defend the right of every movement wishing to participate in our country's political life to exist legally, as long as it respects democratic rules.

This attitude of principle can in our opinion not be limited in any way or admit of any exclusivity, and the MTI, along with every other political grouping, must enjoy the same right to exist.

The role of the government must be restricted to ensuring respect for the law. The government must never make selective choices tending to extend privileges to any group or movement with respect to the exercise of a constitutional right, which would constitute a form of unacceptable tutelage contrary to democratic principles.

Al-'Amil al-Tunisi: Hamma Hammami, Spokesman

First of all, I wish to emphasize the attenuating nature of this question because the MTI is not the only political movement not recognized in Tunisia. Other movements such as ours are in the same situation. The government's stated refusal to recognize a political movement with a religious ideology cannot justify this discrimination, for if, in the case of the Islamists the Destourian regime uses the religious excuse, it does not hesitate in other cases to bring up other ideological and political pretexts to deprive political movements of their right to a legal existence. In all of this, the regime is motivated by its antidemocratism.

Second, the legalization of the MTI or any other political movement is not up to Al-'Amil al-Tunisi, but rather, to the regime, which has the monopoly over the granting of approval. It uses it depending on the political situation. And yet, your question does involve our organization from another angle: Are we willing to support the MTI in its demand to be legalized?

Our organization deals with that problem based on a position of principle, far from any pragmatism or opportunism. Al-'Amil al-Tunisi supports only democratic movements (political parties, social or cultural or humanitarian organizations) whose action moves in the direction of history, independently of the ideological and political differences that might exist. Consequently, it grants no support to antidemocratic movements and groups. On the contrary, it does not hesitate to expose their reactionary nature to the people.

On the basis of this position of principle, Al-'Amil al-Tunisi has no relations with the MTI. The analysis it has made of its ideological and political line and of its practical positions has led it to conclude that that movement is antidemocratic.

Strategically speaking, the Islamists aim at the establishment of a theocratic, despotic regime against progress. Under such a regime, there would be no possibility for nonreligious democratic forces (lay forces, and so on) or for the broad masses to exercise their fundamental rights: freedom of thought, religion, expression and organization. Such a regime will in no way solve the economic, social, political and cultural problems now experienced by the Tunisian people and which are due to their domination by a minority of privileged classes linked to Western imperialism. It will not represent a transcendence of the political regime of that minority.

Tactically speaking and based on their narrow religious conceptions, the Islamists have since their apparition affirmed hostility toward the democratic left and its fight for fundamental freedoms.

These are the basic tenants of the position of Al-'Amil al-Tunisi toward the MTI. However, that position can in no way be interpreted as backing for the repression that has swooped down on Islamists since 1981. Our organization expressed its viewpoint on that matter in time. It exposed the real motives for that campaign of repression, which are not, as the regime claims, to safeguard the freedoms it has unceasingly thwarted since it came to power, but rather, to retain the monopoly over political life and that of the use of religion according to its own interests.

Thus, the position of Al-'Amil al-Tunisi is clear: no compromise with the regime or with the religious opposition for the reasons given.

Progressive Democrats: Hichem Gribaa and Hamadi Redissi

Formulated in that way, the question presumes that the recognition of political parties remains a legal act under the competence of the government. The debate that would result would therefore not go beyond the limits of legality *stricto sensu*.

This preliminary clarification seemed necessary because beyond this framework, the recognition of a political party calls forth another type of references: its struggle, its representative nature and the powers it will have to impose itself on the government and other rival bodies.

Consequently, choosing the institutional path -- as the MTI seems to have done -- is not always reduced to a formal act destined to take advantage of the benefits of legality, while avoiding the limitations inherent in democracy. This is where one should go back to the first aspect of the matter of the "proposed constitution organizing political life" and admit that it would be difficult to question the MTI's right to organize as a political grouping. One cannot claim a right while denying others that same right, and it is very likely on the basis of this same assertion that one can derive the rights and obligations of each one, including the MTI. Any candidate for democracy must submit to its contractual logic and the task does not seem to be an easy one. The PDS must gradually get over its patrimonial reflexes and the opposition will have to assume its recognized majority.

Furthermore, it is up to the constitution to spell out the rules of the game, which will not thereby prevent us from using this overall question to express our view on the legalization of the MTI.

On the subject of this political group, we have a series of questions and convictions that we express all the more willingly because we have never been among its followers. We believe, on the contrary, that the MTI would benefit from being informed about the opinion of a certain category of citizens.

With respect to convictions, it is not a matter "here and now" of engaging in a controversy with the MTI on its conception of Islam. Nevertheless, the latter will be apprehended in its direct effect on politics understood in the sense of the leadership of insiders.

Consequently, the challenge to the MTI will be situated at the point where ideology and politics intersect. Two items deserve our attention:

1) The MTI, the state and Islam

In the conception of the MTI, power emanates from God, according to the principle that "Sovereignty belongs to God." Inasmuch as the government of men has only the Koran for legislation, then all human legislation derives from it and has no other purpose than to sanction the reign of God through man.

Once again, it will not be a question of taking up the conformity of this point of view with Islam, especially since the question remains controversial, even among Islamists.

On the other hand, what is certain is that the MTI in its statements is opposed to the separation of state and religion, based on its own vision of Islam and also feeling encouraged by the official exploitation of religion by the PSD.

The Tunisian Government is, one must admit, in an uncomfortable position, insofar as it is simultaneously and, according to the constitution, a Muslim state, the protector of religions (Muslim, Hebrew and Christian) and its political personnel are Muslim and therefore accountable only to God, who alone can penetrate consciences. The Tunisian Government is thus Muslim in its essence, secular in its organization, although secularity means nothing but the separation of state and religion and not atheism, as some would claim.

This is both a paradoxical and delicate situation, but one which has the quality of reconciling Tunisians with their government and the latter with Islam.

For their part, Islamists state they adopt the state-Islam identification, without thereby seeking to impose their will on others.

It should be noted in passing that no political movement, even religious, has spared us the subtleties of politics (trickery, deliberate lying, denials). But above and beyond this type of consideration, a single question seems worthy of interest and remains totally unanswered: If the Islamists should come to participate -- along with other political groupings -- in the exercise of power, would they be able to adapt to the institutions of a secular state? Could they adapt to this co-existence while preaching the state-Islam confusion? And assuming for an instant they alone would hold power, would they then tolerate the other opposition movements? And once the latter took power back from the Islamists, would they "de-Islamize" the state, without thereby "de-Islamizing" it, inasmuch as the state is presumed to be Muslim?

In other words, can the state-Islam identification be reconciled with alternance and legality?

It could happen that the state-Islam identification might not be the source of any concern in itself inasmuch as modernist politicians see themselves in it.

However, a certain "totalizing" conception of Islam would become the source of apprehension once the MTI were in power, for while the PSD spared us the state-Islam identification, while giving us the state-party identification, the MTI, on the other hand, gives us a more all-encompassing identification: state-Islam-MTI.

The MTI is thus faced with a dilemma: either, following the example of the progressive Islamists, embark upon a wrenching but stirring revision of its politically-oriented ideological premises, or seriously give up the state-Islam-MTI confusion, thus opening the way to mutual acceptance. In other words, any discourse on the monopolization of power or authoritarianism, as long as it mobilizes, could keep the MTI on the fringe of legality.

2) The MTI and civilian society

On this point, two kinds of remarks must be made:

a) Tunisia is a country with a civil regime.

It has repeatedly happened that persons claiming to identify with Islamism call for or resort to violence. For its part, the MTI has publicly come out against violence, as no other Islamic manifestation binds it, according to its statements.

We personally believe that the MTI, in pledging to be affiliated with Islam, the thing best shared among Tunisians, must discipline its members. Can the MTI give assurances that such and such a violent Islamist is not among its members? Whatever the case, an end must be put to the ambiguity of the "political" leadership and of the "ideological" rank and file.

It is for this reason that isolated positions that are both unequivocal and constant would be useful on the part of the MTI whenever the problem of violence comes up.

b) The civil society is rich and multifaceted, on both the civic and religious levels. Coexistence is therefore necessary and only the law, backed by punishments, protects society. Now then, if the political government is the expression of the unity of society, it is not confused with it and for that reason, Tunisian legislation is liberal.

In our country, society has made achievements, including the Personal Status code, partially inspired by Islam, and individual freedoms (freedom of circulation, of conscience, privacy, and so on), included in the constitution and which a collective conscience tends to promote. Are these accomplishments to be carried further or to be challenged and what is the position of the MTI on this type of question?

To date, except for the profession of faith: Everything is Islam, all Islam for all society, and so on, the positions of the MTI are ambiguous, to say the least.

In conclusion, we shall say that democracy is an option of civilization and is not reduced to this platitude: government of the people, by the people and for the people. All democracy is organized. It necessarily implies common ideological and/or political values, a consensus on institutions. In other words, it would be the expression of a state of deliquescence, a prelude to decadence or totalitarianism. It therefore presumes mutual tolerance and recognition of the legitimacy of all.

In our country the PSD is the heir of the national movement and the opposition movements forge their own legitimacy. To treat the former as if it were a "Taghi" usurper and the latter as forced partners is suspect, to say the least.

The MTI must not be excluded from pluralism, but it owes it to itself to interiorize democracy in order to make it a strategic and not tactical dimension of its political vision, as in the case of progressive Islamists.

This is the sum of convictions and questions which the legalization of the MTI inspires in us. However, one major question remains unanswered: The MTI has not yet revealed its political program.

Islam Introduced Into Problems

Tunis LE MAGHREB in French No 84, 31 Dec 84 pp 17-18

[Article by Ahmed Manai]

[Text] Omar S'Habou's editorial on the MTI's right to be legalized evoked a number of responses, most of them in Arabic. For the French sector, we have chosen to publish the following two responses and another clarification by the editor of LE MAGHREB.

1 -- The MTI's right to legalization has an answer on the different levels of natural, Islamic, constitutional and international law governing Tunisian society. Everything combines, in fact, to stimulate, encourage (Islamic law makes it an obligation) and, at worst, authorize men, whether or not they are citizens, to organize, band together and combine their efforts to serve man and society.

2 -- In this specific case, that law has been confirmed by recent events, which mean that the movement has been implicitly recognized as soon as, by trying and convicting its members, the courts have each time done so for reasons and motives not related to the establishment of the MTI.

3 -- If the question must truly be posed, it must be posed to the proper person because in the final analysis, it is not up to parties only recently tolerated or seeking legalization, but still seeking legitimization, or even to the PSD in power to decide whether or not and under what conditions the MTI has the right to be legalized. Some, unafraid of ridicule, have dared to speak out and advance their conditions....

Let us not require of the MTI as the price of its legalization things not required of others and let us not demand a clear and transparent ideological identity (provided its leaders are cleared of any subordination to foreign interests) or any detailed economic program, while everywhere else one sees nothing but vagueness, sometimes a vacuum, if not mediocrity. Very fortunate are those who could find in the texts and literature of the opposition groups -- with the exception of the Tunisian Communist Party, whose source of inspiration is something other than generous intentions, a reformist spirit often unrelated to reality -- anything but variations on old government plans, plus promises of the unknown.

4 -- There is, however, one essential point in the debate on which the MTI file seems easy to defend: that of the movement's connection with the republican state and its institutions. It is more in the action of the leaders of the movement than in their literature that one has to seek it.

In the confusion roused by the formation of the MTI 3 years ago, very few people took the trouble to learn the motivation for their action, so busy were they making accusations, and few were those who understood the scope and meaning of the message of the Islamists. And yet, we are dealing with a profound evolution, even a veritable revolution, in the spirit and practices of members trained in the school of clandestinity and secret organization and profoundly influenced by the history and doctrines of the Muslim Brotherhoods. One must recall that the latter expressly excludes any undertaking of the type on which the MTI has embarked, to wit, the establishment of a political party, even Islamic. It seems to me that the case of the MTI is unique in the Muslim world and that it is an event to meditate upon.

Personally speaking and at the risk of surprising some, I can only interpret this gesture as proof of the MTI's frank support for the institutions of the republic and of the determination of its leaders to act within the framework of the law and respect for the country's main options. To assert the opposite or claim that this is a matter of pure tactics on their part is defamation. This is more than adequate, I believe, in order to recognize it legally and enable its leaders, finally rehabilitate, to give Tunisians news of their attachment to democracy. Those whom I know will certainly not fail to do so, having more than once demonstrated their wisdom.

Whatever the case, whether legalized or not, the MTI will already have rendered eminent services to Tunisian society. The reintroduction of Islam into our set of problems will not have been its smallest merit and we at least owe it the following: the fact that the attachment to the Arab-Islamic identity of the country is now claimed forcefully by all political groups, even among the ranks of those who only yesterday were preaching the annihilation of Islam.

Time Frame

Tunis LE MAGHREB in French No 84, 31 Dec 83 pp 18-19

[Article by Moncef Ben Mahmoud: "By When?"]

[Text] An amalgam of ideas and concepts is advanced higgledy-piggledy on the subject of the MTI without considering a certain methodology of reasoning which situates the facts and events in their historical context and specific socio-political frameworks.

In this connection, I think it is worthwhile to discuss and delve further into certain ideas and concepts that are frequently among the accusations made against the Islamists.

1 -- MTI, political program: On the practical, real and logical level, the legalization of a movement does not automatically mean investment of the wheels of government and the administration of the nation. This is much more than a nuance, for there is a cardinal difference between the two. This was apparently the basis used by S'Habou to make an analysis presented from the very beginning, containing this flaw in form.

A political grouping is normally formed following a series of interviews, meetings and consultations of the founding members, who set forth a preliminary political and ideological framework and the means and objectives of the movement in question. Following this, they go through the necessary administrative procedures to obtain approval. Theoretically, according to the regulations on associations, this political grouping must then be legalized. Legalization is a legal act derived from the competency of the government.

Furthermore, the law does not to my knowledge stipulate the need to present a detailed and well-defined political program spelling out the new political alternative proposed.

A movement that is therefore recognized enters the political arena and proceeds to expand its political framework on the basis of which it was legalized and to broaden its base among the people through the institutions, organizations and combined efforts of all members.

It is the masses and only the masses which, through real democratic competition, decide whether or not to back the political program of one movement or another, knowing the "identity of the candidate with the administration of the nation."

It therefore seems to me that it is premature to ask for accounts from a movement whose principal leaders are not only unjustly imprisoned in the Borj Errou Erroumi cells, but who can therefore be prevented from organizing the movement's own debate!

Even the release of its leaders is inadequate inasmuch as they would be required to meet, communicate with rank and file, hold meetings in order to make decisions, clarify, define and even change the orientations of the movement. Is it a legal and regulatory framework they must go through or should one expect another political trial -- if there is ever amnesty -- with the charge being membership in an unrecognized association (sic)?

In short, the nonpublication or absence of a political program, which is true for the MTI, does not constitute a handicap for which reason the Islamic movement is kept out of the political arena. Furthermore, all the other groups are in the same bag. To speak of agrarian reform, coexistence of the three economic sectors, the democratization of education and social justice does not in itself constitute a political program!

Secular Nature of the State

"The osmosis" of which S'Habou speaks, achieved by the Destourian government between an Islamic-inspired constitutional text and the organization of the country on a lay basis is not unanimously supported by all Tunisians! Nor is it the ideal! There are Tunisians who do identify with it. But there are others who reject the Destourian concept and opt for a vision of the state in which the temporal and spiritual elements are brought together, united, combined into one. While it is true that there are Tunisians who consider secularity as a civilizational accomplishment for the country and that it must be safeguarded, it is also true that there are other Tunisians who refuse to support the secular model of society. And, in the face of this "osmosis" in which the historical, civilizational Islamic being is splintered, split and crushed, they have a feeling of immense frustration and cultural rape. Pulling society in one direction or another is possible and legal, but on the condition that it be done within a democratic framework and with the approval of the masses. That is precisely what the MTI wants. Once legalized, it could thus participate in the democratic competition with a well-defined political program which, if it should come to power democratically, it would be called upon to apply, like any other movement. That is not a distortion of democracy! By democracy, I mean two things:

1 -- Democracy is the power of the majority -- that is, the executive organ must be representative of the majority and elected by it.

2 -- The executive organ must apply the decisions of the majority, meaning that the government must take the wishes and ambitions of the majority into account.

If the people should one day choose communism, we would submit to their will. We are not the tutors of society. We have asked to enter the political arena, not to impose an Islamic government, but to bring it about. Those who reject the Islamic model -- and who have every right to do so -- have but to work within the framework of the democratic game to bring it down and thus oust the Islamic alternative from power, without resorting to repression, political rough handling and campaigns of denigration, such as the regime uses, much less

dubious political positions in which Islam is attacked outright in its principles, concepts and doctrine, using the MTI as the scapegoat. And yet, the latter has said over and over in its bulletins that it does not present itself as the spokesman of Islam and that it will not impose its political concepts on anyone! Nevertheless, it does possess a certain understanding of Islam that goes along with the reconciliation of Tunisians with their history, past and culture.

However, they continually wield the spectre of a monopoly over Islam and recall that Sunnite (sic) Islam has no church and that it belongs to everyone, as seen in the position of the MDS, which brings us to the charges and the distortion of the political discourse. At this point, while asking whether democracy is a tactical or strategic dimension for the MTI, one has the right also to ask whether, with Mestiri, one will not have a new dictatorship on one's back, whether the Tunisian Communist Party will not be Stalinist, whether the phantom of forced collectivization will not reappear with the MUP and whether Al-'Amil al-Tunisi, which in the name of democracy objectively took the side of the regime and voted against the existence of the MTI, will not turn Tunisia into another Albania! It will finally applaud the Destourian proposal and slam the door in the face of any other alternative.

Actually, all political groups have a certain understanding of Islam. Why then go after the MTI, which emphasizes the "all-encompassing" nature of Islam? If the MTI makes reference to the country's religion to attract the sympathy of the broadest groups of the people, which is an undeniable right, who will prevent the others from doing the same if they so wish? The MTI? Furthermore, all the movements use it in their own way, including the PCT, but it is the credibility of the political language that causes a given political discourse to be most widely heard, the most widespread and the most apt to mobilize!

Response of Omar S'Habou

Tunis LE MAGHREB in French No 84, 31 Dec 83 p 19

[Text] I reiterate and clarify:

The MTI is perceived by all those in politics as being a special case insofar as it introduces a metaphysical dimension into the political competition, contrary to all other Tunisian political movements.

The religious essence of the movement somewhat transcends the constitutional text, which is, despite its references to Islam, basically secular. Therefore, the question of knowing whether the MTI has the right to be legalized is not an implicit denial of a right recognized by the constitution because the MTI transcends the spirit of that same constitution.

Whatever the case, whether the MTI has the right to be legalized is the main question around which the historical debate on pluralism is articulated. Our friends the leaders of the MTI know this well.

Our intention in posing the question is to make Tunisians of the Islamic persuasion and their political adversaries to share equally in the debate.

I also continue to believe that it is healthy and useful for the MTI, first of all, for its political partners and for the entire nation for the MTI to define in detail its concept of the republican state in order to avoid the charges which Moncef Ben Mahmoud deplores.

Without such a preliminary definition, the debate will continue to wallow in collective hypocrisy. Let us not deceive one another. The MTI rouses great anguish among most of its political partners. Only a clear preliminary definition of the way in which it intends to reconcile the republican state and the Islamic government it has the ambition of installing could dissipate that anguish and replace it with a clear platform for debate.

I have also written and I repeat that this necessary effort of preliminary self-identification on the part of the MTI also derives from another precondition: the broadening of the cadres of the MTI. It is at that price that we can debate that they tell us clearly what kind of a republic they intend to institute. In the beginning there must be freedom, including that of the leaders of the MTI.

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CSO: 4519/97

FOREIGN TRADE PLANS FOR 1984 PRESENTED

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 38, 31 Dec 83 p 28

[Text] The permanent commission for preparing and supervising the foreign trade plan held meetings under the chairmanship of Mr Taha Yasin Ramadan, first deputy prime minister in Iraq. Participating in the meeting were Mr Husayn Ali, minister of trade, and a large number of officials. They finished discussions on the groundwork, goals, and indicators of the Iraqi foreign trade plan for 1984, and they studied branch and sector program projects presented by the ministries and non-ministerial state offices. The need to ensure the citizens' needs of essential and basic goods was confirmed during the meetings, to say nothing of providing the economic necessities for growth while continuing to shape it in accordance with the circumstances of the war, circumstances that have required Iraq to accommodate the exigencies of sustaining the war and supporting its position in it.

The meetings sanctioned the following fundamentals and goals:

--A call for the necessity of imports to supplement local production of goods and services and to serve developmental plans.

--Sanctioning an objective outlook in estimating actual needs in accordance with the nature and volume of actual changes in demand for goods and their average consumption rate while at the same time affirming the need to create an effective, dynamic budget that reflects the real supply and demand picture.

--Strengthening a marketing policy which includes the possibility of organized distribution of goods and services, starting with the need to rationalize consumption, put pressure on expenditures, avoid all wasteful trends and squandering of economic resources.

--Developing importing mechanisms in the ministries and various offices.

--Making utmost use of the results of implementing the current year's foreign trade plan with regard to the quantities of arriving goods and materials, signed contracts and total levels in storage.

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CSO: 4404/250

INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION QUADRUPLES DURING PAST 15 YEARS

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 40, 14 Jan 84 p 37

[Text] Specialized industrial sources in Iraq have confirmed that the industrial sector since the July 1967 revolution has faced a number of fundamental tasks. In particular these have included the completion of industrial projects which had been launched without having been executed in the most modern ways; work on completing previously contracted projects that had not been implemented seriously in the past; expansion of existing plants, which would ensure that bottlenecks were eliminated and proper plant capacity utilized; entrance into new industrial fields; the laying down of administrative and managerial structures which conform to the size and new tasks of this sector; the improvement of capital to build small- and medium-scale industrial projects; and the establishment of various projects that can benefit from capital participation and expertise in this field.

In light of these indicators a strategy was adopted which can be summarized as follows:

--Giving industry a key part in development planning by putting renewed emphasis on raising productivity, increasing investment capital in industry, operating production units at proper capacity, improving the capabilities of the industrial production system and depending on advanced technology that suits the country's situation.

--Guaranteeing that the predominant role in industry remains with the socialist public sector and achieving an equilibrium between it and private enterprise.

--Depending on an industrialization strategy with a pan-Arab bent that will serve to integrate Iraq with the Arab states.

--Balancing between economic sectors, especially the industrial and agricultural sectors, so that advances in the industrial sector are closely linked with the agencies of progress in the agriculture sector.

--Giving priority to strategic industries which will establish the infrastructure for industrial progress (i.e. industries responsible for extracting Iraq's natural resources within the scope of Iraq's operating budgets).

--Varying Iraq's export base by reducing the reliance on petroleum in determining national income through the creation of national projects.

--Introducing modern methods and tying industrial progress to training and education programs.

Investment credits for the industrial sector rose from 28 million dinars in 1970 to nearly 1.25 billion dinars in 1980. But this increase did not come about accidentally, since industry was assigned ambitious targets to achieve by attaining high growth rates in its various areas. While the national development plan for 1970-74 strove to achieve an annual growth rate of 7.1 percent in GDP, 11.8 percent for the value-added industrial sector, 6.9 percent for agriculture, 1.8 percent for mining and quarrying, 11.4 percent for electricity and water, 7.7 percent for transport and communications, these growth rates in the 1976-1980 national development plan rose to 16.8 percent in GDP, 32.9 percent for the (manufacturing) industries sector, 7.1 percent for agriculture, 15.5 percent for mining and quarrying, 33 percent for electricity and water, and 16.7 percent for transport and communications.

The record amounts of industrial production increased by nearly 400 percent during the period 1968 to 1980. While the number of workers in the industrial sector in 1968 (in all public socialist, joint, and private sector plants including light industry) did not exceed 144,000, by 1980 the number of workers rose to 280,000. The value of industrial production in Iraq in 1980 surpassed 1.75 billion dinars.

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CSO: 4404/250

KURDISTAN OFFICIAL REVIEWS ECONOMIC PROGRESS DURING WAR

Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 3 Nov 83 p 5

[Interview with Mamnid Ma'ruf Birdawd, secretary general of the Secretariat for Public Works and Housing, by Hasan Ahmad al-'Ani: "Extraordinary Efforts to Implement Projects: 166 Projects Completed During War Years"; date and place not specified]

[Text] The General Secretariat for Public Works and Housing in the Autonomous Region is not the only agency which is investing all of its energy and exerting extraordinary efforts to anchor the supports of progress and revival and build a new cultural structure in the Kurdistan Autonomous Region. Other secretariats are also working with it in a framework of cooperation and coordination. However, this secretariat more than the others, by the nature of its specialization and its work, is able to give material expression to the details of progress in this part of our dear country of Iraq. Wherever there is talk of growth, prosperity, and the resplendent face of Kurdistan, one thinks of the Secretariat of Public Works and Housing.

For a more detailed account of all the activities and functions of this agency, we met with Mamnid Ma'ruf Birdawd, secretary general of public works and housing, to obtain a general outline of the nature of the projects and activities carried out by this agency. He also outlined for us the intensive efforts and projects in the Autonomous Region to develop construction and service projects there. The text of the interview follows.

Multifaceted Duties and Responsibilities

[Question] Please give us a general description of the major outlines of the fields of work of the General Secretariat for Public Works and Housing, and tell us if it is the only agency which handles the details of the duties and activities which fall under the heading of the fields of public works and housing.

[Answer] In looking at the system of administrative organizations, headed by the executive council and the special general secretariats in the Autonomous Region, we note that the General Secretariat for Public Works and Housing is composed of two major directorates, the Directorate of Public Works and Housing and the Directorate of Administrative and Fiscal Affairs, and three

directorates for public works for the governorates of Irbil, al-Sulaymaniyah and Dehuk.

There are two central lines for the work of the secretariat. The first is represented by "repairing and maintaining roads" in the Autonomous Region, while other agencies are in charge of "building and paving" roads. On this basis, we have a secondary role in this field, while in the second area we have the major role in the field of construction, housing, and building projects. One can say that the large, strategic construction projects in the Autonomous Region in the health, education, social and housing fields are the responsibility of this secretariat, while other secretariats handle repair and maintenance after we turn over completed projects to them.

I would like to explain something here. In spite of our secondary role in the field of road repair and maintenance, we have utilized our abilities to go beyond the jurisdiction of our directorate during the war years. We have built and paved a number of roads to ensure the movement of our military units in advanced positions on the battlefield.

Technical Capabilities and Human Resources

[Question] The wide scope and diversity of the nature of the secretariat's work means that the nation must have a large supply of materiel or human, technical and executive resources. Would you be so kind as to shed some light on this subject?

[Answer] There is no doubt that the size of the work entrusted to this secretariat requires ability and potential in keeping with the nature of its movement, taking into consideration as well the genuine and sincere desire of the leadership of the party and the revolution, headed by President Saddam Husayn, to achieve complete development progress in the Autonomous Region in a comparable time period. Hence, this agency has been given what it needs to complete hundreds of different projects. We have had sufficient numbers of cement mixers, shovels, bulldozers, trucks, jackhammers, cranes, and the most modern machinery and equipment available from advanced international organizations and companies.

As for the human element, beginning with planning and ending with implementation with all of the engineering, technical and administrative cadres that entails, we say with pride that the Iraqi work force is the basic element in all of the installations of our work in all of its stages, confirming its outstanding ability and high degree of competence in the field of work.

We must explain one last thing in connection with the widespread projects in the Autonomous Region. In addition to the work of this secretariat, some central state organizations are working to complete a considerable number of projects of a strategic nature, because of the leadership's belief in the necessity of achieving a radiant image and the desired progress in Iraq's Kurdistan.

166 Projects Completed

[Question] An attempt to stop Iraq from continuing to build its new model may be one of the important reasons explaining the aggressive war which has gone on for more than 3 years against our dear Iraq. Could you please give us a brief picture of the projects which the Secretary of Public Works and Housing has carried out?

[Answer] It is difficult to be completely familiar with all of the details, but I will summarize as best I can. During the 3 years preceding the war, the secretariat completed 98 different projects in the three governorates. With the exception of road work, we have continued our work programs with the same zeal and spirit of strength during the war years. During the 3 years preceding the war, we were able to complete 22 projects in al-Sulaymaniyah, 14 in Dahuk, and 32 in Irbil. They included health projects, such as Kuysanjaq hospital and Halabjah hospital, in addition to a hospital with 100 beds in Raniyah, and the construction of 35 housing projects, six educational projects, and eight varied projects such as auditoriums, warehouses and police stations. In addition, there are 17 buildings for official departments and headquarters for federations of students, youth, women, and Kurdish writers, built at a cost of hundreds of millions of dinars. The appropriate planning agencies supervised the distribution of these service projects among all of the villages, districts and subdistricts of the three governorates in the Autonomous Region, and they were not restricted to the central cities. Thus, we can read on a map of Dahuk the names of Zawiyah, Sumayyil, al-'Amadiyah, Zakhu, Bamarni, (Sankur) and Sarsang, in addition to the center of the governorate. In Irbil, in addition to the central city we see the names of Aski Kalak, ('Aynkawah), Taqtaq, Kuysanjaq, Makhmur, (Kawi), Rawanduz, Diyanah, al-Zibar, Mirghuzar and Choman. Projects in the governorate of al-Sulaymaniyah included the seat of the governorate plus Jaliyah, Sirwan, Raniyah, Jamjamal, Sinke, Kolar, Shahrbazar and Darband-i Khan.

Bright Cultural Future

If we followed the construction chart we would find that every day of our just war gives us perseverance and strength to continue to work and advance toward a new, strong Iraq. If we looked closely at the projects which are now in progress, we would note that they indicate an additional leap forward, noting that most of them are in advanced stages and some are more than 90 percent complete. In health services, there are 13 projects centers, clinics and supply centers, including a hospital for lung diseases in Sandur, a hospital with 100 beds in Zakhu, another of the same size in Shaqlawah and another for lung disease in al-Sulaymaniyah. The housing projects provide 151 homes and apartments. There are 42 other service projects in the fields of building schools, day nurseries, clubhouses, libraries, swimming pools, athletic fields, police stations, and buildings for federations and state organizations.

Effective Share in Supporting Battle

[Question] What role are you playing in supporting the just battle which our country is waging against the malevolent Iranian enemy?

[Answer] Considerable numbers of our laborers, technicians and engineers, as well as our machinery and equipment, have played a direct role in the war, side by side with our brave armed forces. They have worked on building and paving roads, while many of our workers have fought against the Iranian enemy in the ranks of the People's Army or as volunteers. They have also contributed money, blood and gold, embodying in this splendid position a bright picture of the new Iraq and the bravery and unity of all of our Iraqi people. They have also expressed their desire to increase efforts exerted to develop and improve production and to maintain and repair machinery.

7587

CSO: 4404/159

LAND UNDER CULTIVATION EXPANDED

Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 19 Nov 83 p 9

[Article by Walid 'Abd-al-Karim: "Great Expansion in Agricultural Acreage In Accordance with Modern Scientific Methods and Plans"]

[Text] The agricultural field in our country is receiving considerable attention, and the agencies in charge of the agricultural operation are trying to develop agriculture, expand the area under cultivation, and make use of modern scientific methods.

Discussion of agriculture in Nineveh Governorate takes on a special nature marked by development. To shed light on this aspect, we met with Dr Jum'ah 'Abd-al-Karim, general director of the General Authority for Agriculture and Agrarian Reform in the governorate. He said: "Agriculture has a distinct character in Nineveh Governorate. The amount of agricultural land is approaching 8 million dunums, and there are large quantities of agricultural machinery and equipment. Agricultural experience is available, and perpetual cultivation is about to prevail in a governorate where agriculture has relied on rainfall."

Dr Jum'ah adds: "The governorate is well-known for growing grain, especially wheat and barley which represent 96 percent of the total annual agricultural production of the governorate. Nineveh produces about 40 percent of the country's total production of wheat and barley.

"The governorate is also noted for its livestock production, especially sheep, which constitute about 21 percent of the total number of sheep raised in this country. A large number of citizens of the governorate are engaged in fattening sheep and calves."

Increasing Agricultural Production

The General Authority for Agriculture and Agrarian Reform in Nineveh has large and varied duties. The general director says "Of course the features which we mentioned previously have set priorities for the main function of the authority, to improve the agricultural situation. On this basis, we have taken two main plans of action:

"First: Concentrating on horizontal expansion to exploit all of the land available for agriculture completely. This past season was marked by production of 6 percent more than scheduled by the plan, and this in turn represents an increase of half a million dunums over the 1981-82 season. Our ambition in achieving our plan for the current season is to call upon all available potential to cultivate land ready for sowing.

"Second, we must achieve an increase in production by another method, that is, vertical expansion in agricultural productivity, which amounts briefly to increasing production averages per unit of acreage. We rely on several methods, including expanding the use of reliable and improved seeds, which means purity of seed strains, cleanliness, dusting seeds against disease, and expanding the use of fertilizer, especially in fertilizing the wheat crop on land which is guaranteed or all but guaranteed rainfall. For comparison, 81,000 dunums were fertilized in the 1980-81 season, and fertilized acreage increased to more than 240,000 dunums in the 1982-83 season. This year more than 400,000 dunums were fertilized. In future seasons we hope to achieve complete fertilization of acreage in regions assured of rainfall, as well as expansion in land which is virtually assured of rain."

Dr Jum'ah went on to mention methods of vertical expansion. He said: "In order to achieve the highest productivity per dunum and in order to give the fertilizer operation rapid and profitable economic returns, our agency has tried to expand fighting undergrowth by using agricultural aircraft and airborne equipment. We are also striving to complete cultivation, sowing and harvesting on schedule without delay, and this will have a great effect on productivity. Therefore there was a strong desire to expedite the operation to supply peasants and farmers with large numbers of tractors, reapers, and other agricultural machinery."

[Question] How do you apply your experience in the field of choosing types of grain and regions suitable for growing them?

[Answer] The general director confirmed: "In recent years the authority has tried to determine the areas suitable for growing the varieties of wheat and barley used. It made arrangements with the appropriate research agencies to introduce types more suitable to environmental and climatic conditions. In this field, our authority has selected good farmers and distributed to them one of the types of imported wheat which we wanted to raise this season, and subsequently will distribute it to the farmers in regions which are virtually assured or are not assured of rain, beginning with next season. This is a first-rate variety which stands up to drought and is characterized by its high yield."

Scientific Research

This reply led us to talk about the importance of scientific agricultural research. The general director said: "Yes, we believe that it is necessary to follow modern scientific methods in agriculture. We held a large-scale scientific council whose participants included specialized professors in the colleges of agriculture in the nation's universities, specialists from the

Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform, and farmers with practical experience in agriculture in general and grains in particular. The council discussed the best scientific methods, the ideal uses of agricultural machinery, and methods of improving the stages of growing grain, such as cultivation and sowing."

Agricultural Workers Organization

In view of the size of the agricultural acreage in the governorate, the presence of large numbers of farmers and agricultural workers who are skilled in various types of agricultural operations, and the existence of animals and other resources, the local Federation of Farmer Cooperative in Nineveh has a prominent and influential leadership role. Along with the other agricultural organizations in the governorate, it is gaining the interest and attention of the party's agricultural council and agricultural workers' office, to succeed in obtaining the needs of the active worker and agricultural community in this large governorate.

At the federation's office, we spoke with Tahir 'Aydan 'Isa, president of the federation. He said: "Proceeding from a firm belief in the responsibility of the professional and mass organizations toward their national duties in our country, which is waging a defensive holy war against the malevolent Iranian enemy, our federation and its branches in the subdistricts of the governorate have a leadership duty in educating and teaching the peasant masses and instilling the basic principles and concepts for which our courageous Arab Ba'thist Socialist Party is fighting."

He added: "On this basis and within the considerations of building a new populace, creating cultural, political, and socialist awareness, and providing the best economic and essential needs, the federation is working to develop the cooperative movement and make it a significant tool to serve the agricultural and peasant sector."

One Hand Plants, Other Carries Arms

Muhyi-al-Din Ahmad, vice-president of the local federation, familiarized us with the administrative and professional situation of the federation. He told us: "The local federation maintains an executive office with five workers. It has ten branches in the subdistricts of the governorate. The federation and its branches supervise the work of 86 local societies and collective farms and seven cooperatives specializing in raising livestock. These duties are aimed at following the agricultural operation, pursuing educational and counseling activities, following the implementation of the seasonal and annual agricultural plans, participating in the work of related specialized committees, organizing celebrations for the agricultural workers on national holidays, and mobilizing efforts to strengthen the national economy and achieve victory in our holy war, whose slogan is: 'One hand plants, the other bears arms, to defend the nation and the revolution.'"

BRIEFS

INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS--Sources in the Ministry of Industry and Minerals in Iraq confirmed that the number of industrial projects implemented through its agencies during the 3rd year of Iraq's involvement in the dangerous war against the present Iranian regime reached 33. Also the ministry through its agencies has achieved a 9 percent completion rate over the production plan during the first quarter of the present year when compared with the same period last year. The rate of increase for consumption of electricity in all parts of Iraq amounts to 23 percent annually so that the public electric company has invested directly in building a number of projects to supply electric power to residential areas in various parts of the country. [Text] [London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 38, 31 Dec 83 p 27] 9587

DIYALA INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX--The Diyala industrial complex belonging to the Ministry of Industry and Minerals in Iraq during the first 10 months of the past year has achieved a production rates in excess of the yearly production plan. The meters plant recorded a net total production rate of 105 percent in comparison with the projected level, while the flat iron plant achieved 111 percent, the cigarette lighters plant nearly 113 percent. But the fans plant only reached 95 percent of actual planned production. [Text] [London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 39, 7 Jan 84 p 28] 9587

SULFURIC ACID RECOVERY--Some Iraqi researchers and specialists working at the General Organization for Sulphur were able to devise a new means of utilizing the accumulated waste products of the manufacturing process for purifying sulphur and to produce sulphuric acid at the same time. They have obtained a patent registered with the specialized scientific organizations. [Text] [London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 39, 7 Jan 84 p 28] 9587

CSO: 4404/250

PRESS REPORTS DEVELOPMENTS IN INDO-U.S. RELATIONS

Reddy: In Acrimonious Phase

Madras THE HINDU in English 12 Jan 84 p 1

[Article by G. K. Reddy]

[Text]

NEW DELHI, Jan. 11.

Indo-American relations, plagued by recurring strains, are going through another acrimonious phase in the wake of sharp differences over a wide range of bilateral issues that could acquire political overtones during this year, when both countries are engaged in elections.

The controversy over the supply of spare parts for the Tarapur atomic power plant has become more complicated following a new decision by India to insist on the contractual obligation of the U.S. to meet its entire requirement of spares, not merely those that cannot be procured from other sources as stipulated by the Secretary of State, Mr. George Shultz, during his visit to Delhi.

Fresh demand

Though the West German Government has agreed to provide most of the 30 odd categories of spare parts sought by India barring five or six items, India has submitted afresh the entire list to the U.S., demanding the supply of the whole lot under the 1963 agreement. The decision to insist on the supply of the entire list has been taken in the light of the congressional decision of November 17 by what is called "committee of conference" representing the two Houses which works out agreed formulations synthesising the views of both of them on different issues in the absence of joint resolutions.

The committee had observed, during a review of the views expressed by the Senate and the House of Representatives on the question of nuclear exports, in response to a request for authorisation by the State Department, that "if the President determines in the case of India's Tarapur reactor, while it is under IAEA inspection, that certain equipment or non-nuclear material or technology is necessary for humanitarian reasons to protect the health and safety of operations, and is not available from a foreign supplier, he may authorise the export of

such equipment or non-nuclear material or technology."

The U.S. Embassy in Delhi has sought clarification from the Government of India which of the spare parts will be supplied by West Germany, before the State Department could process the request for residuary items that are not available from other sources. But India has taken the stand that what had been promised by West Germany was a bilateral matter that had no bearing at all on the contractual obligation of the U.S. to meet the entire requirement of spares in terms of the 1963 agreement.

There is no indication yet of how the Reagan administration is going to handle this new situation, in the context of the congressional authorisation to supply these spares. It is not likely that Washington will agree to provide all the items whatever the legal position. It will probably try to drag its feet to gain time by resorting to protracted discussion, even at the risk of allowing this controversy to acquire a new political dimension.

Sale of computer

Another wrangle has been sparked by the totally unreasonable attitude the U.S. has adopted over the sale of a computer to India for airline reservations. It has sought to impose an unacceptable condition that prior permission will be necessary for putting this computer to a different use even within the country, thereby binding down India to utilise this computer only for the purpose for which it has been permitted to purchase.

Arbitrary provision

Similarly, the negotiations for signing a general memorandum of understanding (MOU), as an inter-governmental umbrella agreement, to regulate the sale of military equipment by standardising the conditions, has run into difficulties because the U.S. continues to insist on retaining an over-riding clause empowering it to cancel any agreement at any stage without

assigning any reason. The MOUs signed by India with other Western countries like Britain, France and West Germany do not contain this completely one-sided and arbitrary provision.

Seats for Indians in U.S. defence establishments

The U.S. has been offering India on a continual basis certain number of seats for higher technical and combat courses to Indian military personnel in its defence institutions. But in recent years India has been availing itself of only the technical courses, not the combat ones, with the result that only a certain percentage of the total seats offered to this country is being utilised, unlike others who take full advantage of such facilities made available to them.

The U.S. has started pressing for utilisation of the full quota of both technical and non-technical courses, with the implied warning that it would be compelled to curtail the number if India is not going to avail itself of all the seats offered to it. But India has decided to ignore

this threat and send only technical personnel for specialised courses.

Meanwhile, the U.S. has been pressing for the inclusion of a senior American officer of the rank of a Brigadier to a reciprocal staff course at the National Defence College in Delhi. After the alleged involvement in the recent espionage episode of one of the junior American officers, who was seconded to the Staff College at Wellington, the Government of India is rather reluctant to the new request. And this in turn might be used by the U.S. as an excuse to refuse to take even some of the Indian officers selected for technical courses to American defence establishments.

There are many more such minor frictions which are souring Indo-American relations. The sad part of it is that each one of these irritants is not by itself of any great consequence, except the Tarapur question. But collectively they tend to create the sad impression of a lurch back to the earlier era of avoidable frictions.

Farm Tie-Up Likely

Madras THE HINDU in English 25 Jan 84 p 9

[Text]

NEW DELHI, Jan. 24.

Prospects of India and the U.S. collaborating in a wide range of projects in agriculture and allied spheres were indicated at the inaugural meeting of the Indo-U.S. Sub-Commission on Agriculture here today.

While the Leader of the Indian delegation, Mr. S. P. Mukherjee, laid stress on collaboration in problem oriented research area and its application through field tests and extension services, the leader of the U.S. delegation, Dr. Orville Bentley, referred to the new possibilities of increasing yield, opened up by the latest advance in biotechnology, tissue culture and embryo transfer, being carried out in his country.

Strides in agriculture: Mr. Mukherjee, who is Secretary to the Union Agriculture Ministry, traced the progress made in agriculture as evidenced by the sizable increase in food production over the last 30 years and said India was the third largest country in the world in cropped area, irrigated area, and area under paddy, groundnut, cotton and jute. He referred to the emphasis being laid on dryland farming, efficient water management and social forestry.

Dr. O. P. Gautam, Director-General, Indian Council of Agricultural Research, reviewed the scenario of agricultural research.

The Sub-Commission was established in April 1979 by the Indo-U.S. Joint Commission on economic, commercial, scientific, technical, educational and cultural cooperation.

Favourable trade balance in 1983: After a five year interval, India is expected to have a favourable balance of trade with the U.S. in 1983.

According to foreign trade statistics for the period, January to October 1983, India's exports to the U.S. has touched a record level of \$1,852.2 millions (Rs. 1,940 crores) and imports from the U.S. were contained at \$1,530.2 millions, resulting in a balance of \$322 millions in favour of India.

Based on this trend, it is expected that, during the calendar year 1983, the balance in favour of India will touch a record level of \$400 millions (Rs. 420 crores).

The last and the only occasion in the past, when the balance was favourable to India, was in 1978-79 at Rs. 10 crores. In all other years, the trade balance has consistently been adverse to India.

Almost 72 per cent of India's exports during January-October 1983 to the U.S. is accounted for by four groups of items: Petroleum crude, diamonds, readymade garments and cashewnuts. Exports of petroleum crude were valued at \$678 millions, as against \$303.4 millions in 1982. Exports of diamonds, readymade garments and cashewnuts were of the order of \$416.2 millions, \$178.9 millions and \$60 millions respectively compared to \$279 millions, \$156.5 millions and \$23.6 millions during 1982.

If this trend continues, India's exports to the U.S. in the whole year of 1983 will be around \$2,218 millions representing 58 per cent increase over the level of \$1,403.8 millions achieved in 1982. The two-way trade is expected to cross the \$4 billions mark.

Prospects of Trade Balance

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 25 Jan 84 p 1

[Text] NEW DELHI, Jan. 24--The country is expected to achieve a favourable balance of trade of nearly \$400 million with the USA in 1983, mainly through the export of Bombay High crude, which cannot be refined in India. Except in 1978-79, when India had a nominal favourable balance of trade of Rs 10 crores with the USA, the position has consistently been adverse.

According to the latest figures received for the first 10 months of 1983 (January-October), India's exports to the USA during this period reached a record of \$1,852.2 million. Imports from that country have been contained at a level of \$1,530.2 million resulting in a favourable trade balance of \$322 million.

Almost 72% of India's exports for this period is accounted for by four groups of items--crude from Bombay High, diamonds, ready-made garments and cashewnuts.

Exports of crude in the first 10 months of 1983 were valued at \$678 million compared to \$303.4 million of 1982. Similarly, diamonds, ready-made garments and cashewnut exports during the period (January October, 1983) accounted for \$416.2 million \$178.9 million and \$60 million, respectively, compared to \$279 million, \$156.5 million and \$23.6 million during 1982.

If the figures for the remaining two months (Novembers and December 1983) continue to maintain the same trend, then India's export to the USA during 1983 work out to nearly 158% of the rest performance at \$1,403.8 million in 1983. The two-way trade is likely to exceed \$4 million

Indo-U.S. trade has increased from about Rs 682 crores in 1971-72 to about Rs 2,304 crores in 1981-82. The USA accounts for about 11% of India's total exports and 12% of India's total imports.

Major items of India's exports to the USA are textiles, jute manufactures, coir products, diamonds, precious and semi-precious stones, engineering goods, handicrafts, leather and leather manufactures, chemicals and other products and marine products.

CSO: 4600/1473

GANDHI SAYS U.S. AID TO PAKISTAN CAUSES PROBLEMS

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 14 Jan 84 p 1

[Text] Prime Minister Indira Gandhi said in Delhi on Friday that American aid to India's "neighbours" has created problems for the country, report agencies.

Addressing more than 100 professors teaching at Harvard and Colombia universities who called on her, she said India had arms of the 60s and 70s but those provided to Pakistan puts that country a generation ahead.

On the economic front, Mrs Gandhi said the US has decided to cut down contributions to the International Development Agency (IDA). "This affects all developing countries including India" she said.

Replying to questions, Mrs Gandhi told the visiting professors that relations between India and the US were friendly in many areas while not so friendly in others. The geographical compulsions and differences in the economic and political systems of the two countries were always not fully understood in the US, she said.

Brain Drain

Asked how India proposed to stop brain drain, Mrs Gandhi said "We welcome the return of Indian scientists but there are problems of disparities in salaries, standards of living and work opportunities."

She pointed out that even for some advanced countries, brain drain to the US was a problem.

She said that the Government would like to welcome Indians trained abroad to come back but it should be remembered that there was a great amount of talent within the country which was to be fully utilised.

Asked what was India's immediate major concern, the Prime Minister said to do better in family planning, absorbing new technology and taking them to villages in solving many problems like drinking water and fuel."

She also drew the attention to the role television could play in providing information about new farm technology to the rural people.

PAPERS REPORT VISIT OF PRC FRIENDSHIP DELEGATION

Leader on PRC Policy

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 17 Jan 84 p 9

[Text] MR Lin Lin, vice-president, Chinese Peoples' Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, told reporters in Calcutta on Monday that reports of Chinese assistance to Pakistan for manufacture of nuclear weapons were only "rumours". India and Pakistan were neighbours of China and it was not China's intention to set one neighbour against the other, he said.

Mr Lin is currently leading a goodwill delegation which has been visiting various parts of the country since January 4. He said that the Chinese people wanted the Indo-Chinese border dispute solved in a reasonable and fair way. This must also be achieved in a cordial atmosphere and the feelings of the Chinese people should be considered, he felt.

Asked about Sino-U.S. relations, Mr Lin Lin said China wanted to improve its relations with the USA, but the Chinese people would be unhappy if the U.S. leaders did not deal with the Taiwan issue properly. Taiwan was part of China and the matter must be solved in the spirit of the Panch Sheel, he said.

He said that China regarded USSR as one of her neighbours and friendly exchanges were needed for the improvement of ties between the two countries. The USSR, however, must withdraw its forces from Afghanistan and also from its border with China. China also resented the USSR's assistance to Vietnam in installing in Kampuchea a regime to their liking.

Mr Lin Lin said that the peasants and workers of China were striving to fulfil its modernization programmes in agriculture, industry, national defence and science and technology. China also believed in a civilization which promoted both material and spiritual development.

The Indian Coffee Workers Co-operative Society and the Indian China Friendship Association, West Bengal State Committee, accorded a reception to the delegation members, Mr Mansur Habibullah, the State's Judicial Minister, said that during the past four years, the relations between the two countries had improved.

Our Staff Correspondent in Santiniketan adds: The five-member Chinese delegation, led by Mr Lin, visited Santiniketan yesterday. The delegation members, among other places, visited Cheena Bhavan at Santiniketan, prior to their departure the same evening.

Indian Marxists Lauded

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 19 Jan 84 p 5

[Text] CALCUTTA, Jan 18 (UNI)--China feels that the policy of the Indian Marxists to carry on their movement through parliamentary means was perfectly justified in view of the "situation" existing in India

Mr Lin Lin, leader of the five-member delegation of the Chinese People's Association for friendship with Foreign Countries, told newsmen here yesterday that China's past experience suggested that imitation of movement models might not be beneficial.

Asked whether China thought West Bengal's Marxists coming to power through ballot-boxes was in reality a departure from the professed path of 'armed movement.' Mr Lin asserted there was "nothing wrong in it."

Mr Lin who is also a prominent member of the national committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, said the Chinese Communist Party would not interfere in the workings of the Communist Parties in India or for that matter in any other parts of the world.

There could not be any imposition of model on any Communist Party. Movement should be conceived and directed according to the situation existing in a country, he added.

Mr Lin and four delegates who were attending a reception accorded by the Calcutta press club also talked about Sino-Soviet relationship and said the desired normalization would much depend on the present Soviet leadership.

He, however, suggested cultural exchanges for starting the normalization process. The obstacles in the way, he said, were in the form of presence of Soviet troops along the border, occupation of Afghanistan and the US stance on Kampuchea.

According to the delegation leader, China did not indict the late Mao tse-Tung and his policies and still 'holds his banner high', though it was a fact that some of the policies toward the end of his life triggered a fall in living standards and led to stagnation in economy.

Mr Lin said the present leadership had given up the past practice of setting lofty targets in rejuvenating the economy. There had been much reorientation in his country's foreign and domestic policies and strategies, he added.

CSO: 4600/1470

ANALYST TELLS EXPECTATIONS FROM USTINOV VISIT

Madras THE HINDU in English 25 Jan 84 p 1

[Article by G. K. Reddy]

[Text] NEW DELHI, Jan. 24--There is considerable speculation in western diplomatic circles here over the political purpose and possible outcome of the visit of the Soviet Defence Minister, Marshal Dimitri Ustinov, who will be arriving on February 6 on a four-day trip to keep up the continuity of high-level Indo-Soviet exchanges.

The importance that India itself is attaching to this visit is evident from the fact that Marshal Ustinov will be put up at Rashtrapati Bhavan, making a special exception to the current policy of having only heads of State or Governments stay there.

Visit to Avadi: Among the places the Soviet Defence Minister will be visiting will be Madras to have a look at the Heavy Vehicles Factory at Avadi where India is setting up facilities for indigenous manufacture, under licence, of the latest version of the T-72 tanks incorporating many technical improvements.

Apart from many other weapon systems that India will be acquiring from the Soviet Union, there will be detailed discussions on the initial sale and subsequent technical assistance for the manufacture of the latest aircraft in the MIG series to match the F-16s supplied by the U.S. to Pakistan. The marvelous Soviet aircraft, which has yet to be christened MIG-29 or 31, is supposed to surpass the performance of the F-16s under present operational conditions.

Umbrella agreement: Any agreement that India might sign with the Soviet Union for the acquisition of these aircraft will naturally entitle the country to opt for more sophisticated versions later on to catch up with the technical advances the U.S. might make in switching over to an altogether new generation of fighter-bombers for replacing the F-16s in due course. It has to be an umbrella agreement giving India access to Soviet technological innovations to meet its defence requirements, depending on the country's capacity to adapt itself to them.

But the main purpose of Marshal Ustinov's visit is not to negotiate any new arms deals, since it is not customary for Indian or Soviet defence ministers to engage in detailed discussions, much less sign agreements, during their goodwill missions. The talks on such occasions are intended primarily to set the right tone and provide a sense of priority for follow up discussions by experts on financial and operational aspects of such transactions.

The Soviet Defence Minister is paying this visit mainly for political reasons, since Mr. Yuri Andropov is not well enough to fulfil his promise to make his first trip outside the Soviet Union to India after succeeding the late Leonid Brezhnev to the top post in the Kremlin. As one of the key figures in the new Soviet hierarchy, Marshal Ustinov will be able to speak with full authority on behalf of the entire Soviet leadership in any new commitment he makes during this visit to carry forward Indo-Soviet cooperation.

Strategic compulsions: The Soviet Union has not been too happy with India's policy of diversification of its defence purchases if only to avoid the impression of undue dependence on any one power, although the bulk of the supplies is provided by it. Apart from political considerations, the Indian defence thinking is conditioned by strategic compulsions requiring greater flexibility in the choice of the weapon systems.

But otherwise the Soviet Union has been very impressed by the professional efficiency of the Indian armed forces in the use of the equipment supplied by it. The earlier MIGs have been upgraded by stepping up the performance of the engines, incorporating the latest electronic navigational and fire-controls systems and modifying the airframes for fitting latest missiles. Similarly, the old T-52 tanks have been up-gunned to give them a greater range and better first strike capability under battle conditions.

Visiting Soviet Defence Ministers have paid only courtesy calls on the President and the Prime Minister, but otherwise confined their contacts to their Indian counterparts, besides the Chiefs of the three Services. But since Marshal Ustinov is in a way coming on a semi-political mission by deputising for Mr. Andropov, it remains to be seen whether the Soviet embassy will try to arrange meetings for him with the Indian communist leaders, who were invited to meet the visiting Soviet dignitaries in the past.

Support in poll: As the present Soviet leadership has come out quite openly in support of Mrs. Indira Gandhi's Government, it is considered unlikely that Marshal Ustinov will let go the opportunity to plug the new Soviet line if he is able to meet at least some of them in the normal course, without giving the impression that Moscow is trying to exert pressure on them to back Mrs. Gandhi in the coming elections.

There is no intention at all on the part of the Government of India to exploit Marshal Ustinov's visit for such a political purpose. But it would not be surprising if the Soviet embassy has other ideas and makes some moves on its own with the tacit approval of the host Government to get Moscow's message across to the local communist leaders through him.

A high-power Soviet delegation consisting of three senior Ministers--Mr. V. Symshits, Mr. N. Goldin and Mr. Y. R. Ryabov--arrives on Jan. 29, a week before Marshal Ustinov's visit, to participate in the silver jubilee celebrations of the Bhilai steel plant. But none of them has the same political clout or personal importance as Marshal Ustinov and will not be able to speak with equal authority on Soviet policies towards India, more particularly Mrs. Gandhi in the context of Moscow's pleas to Indian communists to back, at least not oppose her, in the next elections.

CSO: 4600/1474

ANALYST DISCUSSES POLICY TOWARD BHUTAN

Madras THE HINDU in English 26 Jan 84 p 1

[Article by G. K. Reddy]

[Text] NEW DELHI, Jan. 25--The King of Bhutan, who arrived here today on a four-day State visit, will be the guest of honour at the Republic Day parade tomorrow, a rare distinction for the ruler of this ancient Himalayan kingdom with which India has very close relations.

The decision to extend this invitation to the 28-year old King Jigme Singye Wangchuk is part of the new diplomatic efforts being made to improve relations with all the neighbouring countries in the region.

The King who flew to Hashimara this morning from Paro in an IAF helicopter arrived in Delhi by a special plane this afternoon. He was received by the President, Mr. Zail Singh, the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, and others with full state ceremonial including a guard of honour and a gun salute.

Main thrust of relationship: Though its special treaty relationship entitles India to advise Bhutan on its foreign relations and assist the kingdom in its defence, the current policy is to encourage the King to bear this responsibility with such help as he might require from India by combining continuity with change. The main thrust of India's bilateral relationship now is in the economic sphere to help develop this landlocked kingdom.

It was India that sponsored Bhutan's membership of the U.N. and also its inclusion in the Colombo Plan, besides admission to the International Postal Union. Apart from Delhi and New York, the only other place where Bhutan maintains a diplomatic mission is in Dhaka where its trade mission was quietly elevated to the level of an embassy without India's consent during the Charan Singh interregnum.

Border row with China: The kingdom has an unsettled border problem with China which has laid claims to large tracts of Bhutanese territory where it has lately started sending out patrols along with the Tibetan graziers who go to this area with their yaks during the summer season.

The border talks between Bhutan and China are due to commence in May this year either in Beijing or at any other mutually convenient place. The Government of India has been assisting Bhutan in drawing up the maps of the disputed areas and preparing briefs for these talks, but the actual negotiations with China will be conducted by Bhutanese representatives.

The main Indian interest in these negotiations is to ensure that through lack of expertise the Bhutanese do not concede any principle that might impinge on its own talks with China for a settlement of its border dispute in the adjoining north-east region. But otherwise India has no desire to get involved in these discussions between China and Bhutan, and it would prefer to keep out as it did in the case of Nepal's border talks with China, confining its interest only to the trijunctions.

P.M.'s talks with the King: After he paid courtesy call on the President and received the Vice-President, the Prime Minister, Mrs. Gandhi, met the King for about an hour at the Rashtrapati Bhavan for a talk on some of these aspects of Indo-Bhutanese relations. The President gave a banquet in his honour in the Rashtrapati Bhavan tonight.

The External Affairs and Finance Ministers, Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao and Mr. Pranab Mukherjee will call on him on Thursday for a general discussion. The Chief of the Army Staff, General A. S. Vaidya, will also call on the King before he leaves Delhi.

CSO: 4600/1475

GANDHI SENDS MESSAGES TO DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 17 Jan 84 p 7

[Text] Mrs Indira Gandhi has urged world leaders to strive in the new year to halt the drift towards nuclear confrontation and to work towards solving the regional conflicts that endanger world peace.

In message to the European Disarmament Conference that begins in Stockholm on Tuesday, and the Islamic Summit at Casablanca in Morocco, Mrs Gandhi as chairperson of the non-aligned movement focussed on crucial issues of world peace, disarmament and restructuring of the international economy which had perhaps not witnessed in the past year the progress that had been hoped.

In her message to Prime Minister Olof Palme of Sweden, Mrs Gandhi hoped that the disarmament conference would consider the issues with a sense of urgency as it was being held at a crucial time. "All of us who are in politics must think beyond short term considerations" with statesmanship and farsightedness in a matter "which literally is one of life and death for everyone", Mrs Gandhi said.

In her letter to King Hasan of Morocco--who had invited the NAM chairperson to attend the Islamic summit, Mrs Gandhi said the danger of global conflict had not abated and international peace was threatened because of regional tensions.

Expressing her regrets for not being able to attend because of her commitments, Mrs Gandhi said most of the Organisation of Islamic Conference members were from the NAM therefore the perceptions and concerns of the movement would be reflected at Casablanca.

Mrs. Gandhi has sent secretary in the External Affairs Ministry Romesh Bhandari, who is currently in West Asia on the NAM mission on Palestine, to represent her at the Casablanca summit.

CSO: 4600/1472

BENGAL DELEGATION REQUESTS PRESIDENT'S RULE

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 25 Jan 84 p 1

[Text] NEW DELHI, Jan. 24--A five-member delegation of the West Bengal Congress (I) today submitted a memorandum to President Zail Singh demanding imposition of Central rule in the State. The delegation pointed out that the law and order situation there had deteriorated beyond measure, leading to the killing of two of their party workers in a police firing. It also asked for a judicial inquiry into the police firing in Calcutta on January 17 last.

Mr Muzaffar Khan, general secretary of the West Bengal Youth Congress (I), Mr Shanker Bhowmick, south Calcutta District Congress (I) Committee, and Mr Harasit Ghosh, general secretary of the West Bengal Congress (I) Lawyers' Cell, were among those who formed the delegation.

The memorandum said the Left Front Government had "totally failed to maintain law and order in the State and the CPI(M)-supported hoodlums have been let loose to terrorise Congress (I) workers".

The memorandum said that incidents of loot, dacoity, murder, rape and arson had become a "daily routine" in West Bengal and Congress (I) workers were being murdered in the districts every day.

Till today, it claimed 890 party workers had been killed, thousands forced to leave their home and hundreds of innocent Congress (I) workers had been implicated in false cases. Even Congress (I) MLAs and PCC (I) office-bearers were not spared from assaults by CPI (M) "hoodlums".

On January 15, two senior leaders, Mr Somen Mitra and Mr P.R. Das Munshi, were arrested "on a baseless charge. The police resorted to lathi-charge and unprovoked firing, killing two and injuring many Congress (I) workers. The police arrested 1,500 Congress (I) workers in raids conducted during the night in different parts of Calcutta on the instruction of the Left Front Government", the memorandum added.

It was alleged that the Left Front had failed to solve power crisis, and this led to closure of a number of industrial units, and retrenchment of employees.

The memorandum sought immediate intervention of the President "to set right the state of affairs in West Bengal".

LOK DAL RESOLUTION ON ECONOMIC POLICY REPORTED

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 14 Jan 84 p 1

[Text] NEW DELHI, Jan. 13--In a resolution adopted at its just-concluded three-day session, the national executive of the Lok Dal called for a halt "in our policy of increasing international indebtedness" and asked the Government to recast the economic policy on Gandhian principles.

To begin with, it suggested, "we have to gradually reduce all agricultural imports of edible oil, cotton, wheat, milk-powder, paper, etc. We should also reduce our dependence of foreign aid, Euro-dollar and IMF borrowings in the next two to three years to a bare minimum. If such a policy is not adopted, the substance of our independence itself may be in peril".

The resolution on "the economic scene" viewed with deep concern "the growing indebtedness of the country at the cost of self-respect and a spirit of self-reliance" in the past four years. It said India's foreign trade deficit had increased by leaps and bounds. It had been Rs 5,483 crores during 1982-83. This had necessitated a loan from the IMF of about Rs 5,000 crores, with not very wholesome conditionalities, and borrowing from the Euro-dollar market to the extent of Rs 2,000 crores every year, besides the inflow of foreign exchange from resident and non-resident Indians working abroad to the tune of Rs 1,500 to Rs 2,000 crores.

"If this trend continues, we may become beggars in the world market moving from country to country with a cap in our hand. We may then be mortgaging our freedom to international economic forces dominated by some foreign powers".

The resolution said that the state of Indian economy presented paradoxical situations: There were bumper crops and price rise; a raging inflation and stagnation in industrial production; banks facing conditions of excess liquidity and business experiencing shortage of funds; several new issues of capital market being over-subscribed and the stock market showing the rising trends existing concurrently with recessionary conditions.

As a result, the economy was stagnant and the real per capita income had not increased at all in the past four years. The money supply had increased by 15% on an average, while the national income had not gone up by more than 3%, despite unprecedented flow of funds from abroad, either in foreign aid or funds coming from resident and non-resident Indians abroad. Strangely, in the country today, there was not only under-utilization of capital, but also inefficient use of it.

REPORTS ON OUTCOME OF LOK DAL EXECUTIVE MEETING

Mishra Press Conference

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 13 Jan 84 pp 1, 9

[Text] NEW DELHI, Jan. 12--Another round of talks to forge unity among the Opposition parties--conducted in the past few days between the Janata Party and the Lok Dal leaders--has come to naught. While stressing the need for Opposition unity, the Lok Dal vowed here not to take on itself the responsibility of initiating unity talks in the light of its 'bitter experience, in the past, but deputed its general secretary, Mr S. N. Mishra, to represent the Lok Dal in the unity talks set in motion by other non-Congress (I) groups.

After a three-day meeting of the Lok Dal National Executive, Mr Mishra, who briefed the Press, said today that in his party's view "nothing short of a merger" of all the non-Communist Opposition parties would be adequate, if they sincerely wished to bring about an Opposition unity. The Lok Dal has striven in that direction by forging the National Democratic Alliance with the Bharatiya Janata Party.

Mr Mishra indicated that there could be further talks with "four or five" Opposition leaders, but he would not name them. Even for this, Mr Mishra made two important stipulations. First, the Lok Dal's alliance with the BJP is unshakeable. Secondly, Mr Mishra noted even in the event of an electoral understanding among the Opposition parties, the Lok Dal would not agree to adjustment of seats in respect of certain people.

Asked whether the Lok Dal had received any invitation to attend the two-day Opposition Conclave beginning in Calcutta tomorrow, Mr Mishra said there was no question of their participation in it.

In a resolution on the "political situation", the National Executive of the party noted that there were "rends of decline in the ruling Congress (I)'s position in the country", and declared that "the Congress (I) has to be dethroned from power at the earliest opportunity, because the situation today is not of taking over from Mrs Gandhi, but of saving the country from anarchy to which it has been surrendered by her".

The resolution said that "the executive sees in the results of the recent by-elections the clear and unmistakable signs of people being ready to help and support a united Opposition to replace the present ruinous regime Mrs Gandhi. It, therefore, welcomes the renewed urge in the ranks of the like-minded Opposition parties to forge unity and mobilize the people".

It said that the conditions in the country were deteriorating fast, but the ruling party had proved utterly incapable of dealing with them because these conditions had been of its own creation.

In Punjab, the situation remained chaotic and disturbing. In Assam, an illegal Government continued to be a challenge to the people there. In Jammu and Kashmir, the ruling party was using all means to oust a legally-constituted Government.

The resolution noted that some of the other State Governments run by the Opposition parties were also under direct or indirect pressure to fall in line with the ruling party. In the economic field, the resolution said, inflation was rising foreign debt was mounting, and poverty and unemployment went on escalating. On the other hand, the Government was engaged in pomp and pageantry, in the name of international conferences and tournaments and other acts of extravagance.

All in all, the resolution said, the country was increasingly being rendered ungovernable and the political system itself is getting discredited and losing credibility.

Resolutions Reported

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 15 Jan 84 pp 1, 9

[Text] NEW DELHI, January 14--THE national executive of the Lok Dal has sought a review of whether India still remains a "state" or has been converted into an "estate" belonging to the Prime Minister and her family.

Releasing six documents following the three-day meeting of the national executive, Mr. Shyam Nandan Mishra pointed out that serious note had been taken of the increasing "politicisation of the economic policy and schemes" which made nonsense of planning and scientific approach.

Criticising the glitter and the pomp at the Ramlila ground function where Mr. Rajiv Gandhi distributed Rs. 17 crores in loans to nearly 41,000 people from "supposedly weaker sections," the national executive felt that "to select people for largesse for buying their electoral support cannot do justice to the really poor and needy."

Expressing its support to the "genuine welfare" of the poor and the needy, the executive feared that as the next general election drew close, these exhibitions with party functionaries at their head would be multiplying and it warned the people to beware of "such deceitful tamashas of the ruling party."

'Domestic Servants'

The executive criticised Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, who directed the organisation of the function "praising and welcoming Mr. Rajiv Gandhi," for spending more time in looking after the party affairs than the finances of the country and also the managers of the nationalised banks for behaving like "domestic servants" instead of "public servants."

"There was not a shred of justification for inviting a private individual and in organising pomp and pageantry for him with public money, to distribute public funds and exploit the occasion for party purposes," the resolution said.

In another resolution, the Lok Dal executive demanded the resignation of the Bihar government as a sequel to the murder of 14 children in Pipariya village, in Monghyr district.

The executive condemned the heinous crime and expressed concern at the fast deteriorating law and order situation in Bihar. It also demanded that suitable compensation be paid to the families concerned and that the criminals be arrested forthwith.

On the economic front, the Lok Dal has called for a halt to the policy of increasing international indebtedness and wants the government to recast the economic policy on Gandhian principles. Referring to the IMF loan of Rs. 5,000 crores, borrowings from Euro-dollar market of Rs. 2,000 crores every year over the last four years and the inflow of foreign exchange of about Rs. 2,000 crores from resident and non-resident Indians, the executive felt that if this trend continued, 'we may become beggars in the world market' and 'we may be mortgaging our freedom to international economic forces dominated by some foreign powers.'

The party resolution criticised the government for its "anti-kisan attitude and policies" on fixing of prices of sugarcane and wheat and supply of electricity to farmers. Expressing support to the Sheikari Sangathan in its demand for the abolition of the agricultural prices commission (APC) and the setting up of an agricultural costs commission (ACC), the resolution feels that the APC has become a "smoke screen" for the anti-farmer policies of the government.

In its political resolution, the party asserts that it is not apologetic about its campaign to oust Mrs. Gandhi from power "as she happens to be the prime architect of the country's ruin and degradation."

Calling for the "dethronement" of the Congress at the earliest, the Lok Dal sees in the results of the recent by-elections "the clear and unmistakable signs" of people being ready to help and support a united opposition to replace the present "ruinous regime." It welcomes "the renewed urge in the ranks of the like-minded opposition parties to forge unity and mobilise the people who are anxiously waiting for their united call"

The resolution points out that the Congress was defeated decisively in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh and the recent by-elections have shown that despite a fragmented opposition, it (Congress) has done badly in U.P. and Bihar.

Assailing the Congress for being incapable of dealing with the situation in Punjab and Assam and for using all means to oust a legally-constituted government in Jammu and Kashmir, the resolution also criticised the Congress for applying pressure on non-Congress-ruled states to fall in line with the ruling party. It specially refers to the attempts being made to seduce legislators in Karnataka with the help of huge monetary resources.

It its review of the recent by-elections, the Lok Dal states that the results have an ominous import for the ruling party though they are not flattering for the opposition parties either. It infers that the heartland of the north--U.P. and Bihar--have served notice on the ruling party and also made it clear that a united opposition has victory within its reach as in 1977 while a fragmented opposition means wasting precious votes.

CSO: 4600/1463

REPORTAGE ON OPPOSITION PARTIES' CALCUTTA MEETING

13 Jan Opening Reported

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 14 Jan 84 pp 1, 9

[Text] LEADERS attending the Opposition conclave in Calcutta on Friday warned the people of an impending economic crisis resulting from the ruinous policies pursued by Mrs Gandhi's Government. Stressing the need for an alternative economic programme they proposed to launch a mass movement against the Centre.

Delegates from different States felt that to ensure success of such a movement the Opposition parties should adopt a common programme of action. In the process, some of the speakers thought, they would emerge as a national alternative to the Congress (I).

They expressed grave concern over the deliberate violations of democratic norms by the ruling party at the Centre. Citing instances they mentioned the Congress (I)'s bid to topple the elected Governments in Karnataka and Jammu and Kashmir and the misuse of the Governor's office by the Centre. The conclave also criticized the Election Commission for "its partisan role."

The conference demanded an immediate review of Centre-State relations and criticized the recent statements of the Congress (I) leaders pleading for centralization of powers. The attitude of the Congress (I), they pointed out, would defeat the purpose of the setting up of the Sarkaria Commission. The meeting regretted that the recommendations of the Srinagar conclave with regard to the Centre-State relations had been contemptuously dismissed by the Centre.

The Opposition leaders felt amused at the Congress (I)'s claim to have turned "socialist again." They said the policies followed by that party had nothing to do with socialism.

The conclave attended by representatives of 16 political parties set up a 14-member drafting committee to prepare five resolutions on the attack on the Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister; steps to be taken to mobilize the masses on economic issues; on the change in the procedure of Central assistance to States during natural calamities; review of the Centre-State relations in the light of the slow progress of the work of the Sarkaria Commission and the

Centre's efforts to topple the non-Congress (I) Governments; and on the uplift of the scheduled castes, backward classes and tribal people.

Initiating the debate on the draft resolution Mr M. Karunanidhi, the DMK leader said that the Centre had toppled governments 42 times in the States except in Sikkim. His party though regional in character attached highest importance to national ideals and interests. It should not, therefore, be singled out as a party professing regionalism and be branded anti-national.

Mr Chandrajit Yadav, leader of the Janwadi Party, suggested that the right to work should be guaranteed by the Constitution. The fruit of their work should go to the people and not to a privileged few. It was strange that despite a record crop, prices were rising, the inflation rate being 15%.

Mr S. Chandrasekhar, leader of the Janata Party, stressed the need for modification of the present economic policies adopted by the Congress (I) which had resulted in high prices and increasing unemployment. He said that the public sector had been made to produce things which largely benefited the private sector. The result was that the private sector was mopping up the entire profit. He pointed out that the IMF loan of Rs 5000 crores was undermining the self-reliance programme of the country. He wanted to know in which sectors the money had been invested by the Congress (I). He surmised that it had been invested in the manufacture of cars, colour TVs, five-star hotels and in such other luxuries. It was strange that while the prices of luxury goods were lowered those of food and other essential items were raised. He stated that the Congress (I) Government was trying to scuttle the food-for-work programme which could keep unemployment in check in the rural areas. The Janata leader decried attempts of the Congress (I) to create misunderstanding about the minority communities. He gave a call for mass mobilization for a movement on economic issues facing the nation.

Mr E.M.S. Namboodiripad the CPI(M) leader criticized Mrs Gandhi's recent observation that the rise in prices was an unavoidable aspect of the country's economic development. He said that this showed that the Prime Minister had a lack of understanding of the country's economy. The statements made by the Congress (I) leaders from time to time gave an impression that there was no necessity to review the Centre-State relations by the Sarkaria Commission.

Mr Mir Qasim, acting president of Democratic Socialist Party, said that paying lip sympathy to social justice and economic wellbeing of the people would bring chaos to the country, to the opposition should present a sound alternative economic programme to the country. He urged the Opposition leaders to mobilize public opinion on the miseries of the people.

Referring to the Centre's toppling game, he said that it was resorted to only in the non-Congress (I) States. He recalled the massive infiltration of armed Pakistanis into Jammu and Kashmir in 1965 during the Congress (I) rule and said that though country's security was at stake the Centre did not think it fit to impose President's Rule on the State.

Mr. K. P. Unnikrishnan, the Congress (S) leader, referring to the situation in Punjab and Assam said that these were national problems which ought to be sorted out on the national platform.

Mr Tridib Chodhury, the RSP leader, supported the call for a sustained mass movement on economic issues which were causing hardship to the masses.

Basu's Opening Speech Summarized

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 14 Jan 84 pp 1, 9

[Text] IN his inaugural address at the conference of political parties and Chief Ministers of five States in Calcutta on Firday, Mr Jyoti Basu remarked that the machinations of the Congress (I) to destabilize the democratically elected Governments "would evoke the wrath of the entire Indian people". He accused Mrs Gandhi of hatching a conspiracy against the Opposition parties.

In a hard-hitting speech, he criticized Mrs Gandhi, her party and her Government. It was a reply to the allegations made against the CPI(M) at the recently held Congress (I) plenum in Calcutta.

Mr Basu observed that, as the date of the next Lok Sabha elections drew near, the Prime Minister's attack on all the parties, which were trying to come together and unite on some urgent common demands of the people, had intensified. He said that during the plenary session of her party, a slander campaign had been launched against the Opposition parties.

Mr Basu, who referred to Mrs Gandhi's tirade against the State Governments of Jammu and Kashmir and Karnataka, alleged that her party and her Government were doing their utmost to destabilize these Governments by taking recourse to the most despicable means.

He stated that Mrs Gandhi had failed to mobilize the people and cooperate with the Opposition, which was fighting against divisive forces. "It is also to be seen how often such forces have been utilized by the ruling party for its partisan ends" he remarked.

Mr Basu, flanked by Mr Farooq Abdullah, Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir and Mr Ashok Mitra, West Bengal's Finance Minister, began his welcome address with the observation that the meeting was being held at a point of time when the nation was facing some of the acutest problems since Independence. The nation's interests, he felt, demanded that "we counsel together", because those who assembled there collectively represented the majority of the Indian electorate.

Admitting that the leaders attending the conclave represented a spectrum of ideologies and points of view, he said: "It is up to us to agree on a minimum programme to cope with the overriding national issues, on the basis of which we could mobilize opinion throughout the country"

He said that the need for such continuous discussions, aiming at a consensus on a programmatic basis, had increased because of the incompetence and opportunistic policies of the party ruling at the Centre.

Mr Basu stated that the Congress (I), which had completed four years of administration, had pushed the nation to the brink of disaster. The national goal of self-reliance had virtually been given up. The external debt was now close to Rs 25,000 crores. The Union Government had borrowed from international financial institutions on terms derogatory to the nation.

Mr Basu said that inflation was on the rampage. Despite the record harvest, the wholesale price index was now 10% higher than in the past year. The rate of industrial growth was barely half of what it had been a decade ago. Plants and factories were closing down. The number of unemployed had crossed the 20-million mark. The Congress (I) had no answer to these problems. The ruling party at the Centre had institutionalized corruption he alleged. It had resorted to jugglery and falsification of statistics and increasingly taking recourse to instruments of oppression.

Referring to the Congress (I)'s "opportunism", he stated that while the Centre criticized the State Governments for taking recourse to overdrafts from the Reserve Bank of India during the past few years it had printed money four times larger than the State's overdrafts.

While Mrs Gandhi talked of land reforms, the Central Government held up assent to land reforms Bills passed by the West Bengal Assembly. While statements were made about the plight of the poor by the Congress (I) leaders, the Centre refused to expand the public distribution system.

He noted that, despite the appointment of the Sarkaria Commission almost a year ago, little positive action had been taken either by the Union Government or the commission to take into account some of the major problems afflicting Centre-State relations. He thought that the utterances of the Congress leaders and steps taken by the Union Government were meant to weaken the federal polity of the nation.

Mr Basu referred to the attack on the Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister, Mr N. T. Rama Rao. He mentioned that a similar attack had been made on him in Patna, a few years ago, in which his host had been killed. He regretted that the Congress Government of Bihar at that time had done nothing to find out the people behind it. He suggested that the conference should adopt a resolution condemning the attack on Mr Rama Rao.

CPI-M Leader's Remarks

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 14 Jan 84 p 1

[Text] THE friendly gesture of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union towards Mrs Gandhi and her party would not soften the CPI(M)'s attitude towards the Congress (I), Mr Harkishan Singh Surjeet, a member of the politburo of the CPI(M), said in Calcutta on Friday. He said Mrs Gandhi's recent pledge to uplift the poor was mere "demagogy".

Mr Surjeet said the Soviet Union was entitled to hold its own opinion about the Indian situation, but that did not influence the Marxists in India. There was nothing wrong if Mrs Gandhi was prepared to support the Soviets on the question of world peace but, inside the country, she was hostile to the working class, which the Marxists represented.

He said that though the CPI had earlier supported Mrs Gandhi on the ground that she had the support of the Soviet Union, it was now against her. He welcomed Mr Rajeswara Rao's recent statement opposing Mrs Gandhi and said this would strengthen Left unity. Neither Mr Surjeet, nor Mr Basavapunnia, however, thought that this would lead to a merger of the CPI and the CPI(M) in the near future.

Mr Surjeet referred to the attack on the extreme Rightist forces in the resolutions passed at the recent AICC(I) session in Calcutta and the tirade against the Left at public meetings. He said the resolutions were meant for consumption in foreign countries. At the public meetings, she had revealed her real attitude towards the Left.

He said Mrs Gandhi's reluctance to introduce land reforms and improve conditions of the rural poor had been shown by the fact that a Bill seeking to bring about land reforms, passed in the West Bengal Assembly more than two years ago, had not yet received presidential assent. Neither had she taken steps to enact a legislation at national level to increase the wages of agricultural workmen.

He, however, said that if Mrs Gandhi was for world peace, the CPI(M) could not but support her on the question. It did not make much sense either to say that Pakistan's military preparations should not cause concern.

Resolution on Economic Policies

Calcutta THE SUNDAY STATESMAN in English 15 Jan 84 pp 1, 7

[Text] OPPOSITION leaders and Chief Ministers of five non-Congress(I) States adopted a resolution in Calcutta on Saturday demanding "a total restructuring" of the economic policies of the Centre and offered an alternative economic programme for the uplift of the poor and the middle class. This was the second day of the conclave marked by a near unanimity on different issues, as one of its spokesmen put it during the Press briefing.

The participants decided to observe a countrywide "Demands Day" on February 13 to be followed by State-level conventions and rallies culminating in a national convention towards the end of March to formulate their line of action. The next Opposition conclave will be hosted by the DMK in Madras in April.

The Opposition leaders also stressed the need for joint action for electoral purposes to defeat the Congress(I) at the polls. They felt that as the Opposition parties had agreed to meet, discuss and adopt unanimous resolutions on various issues it indicated that they were moving towards unity. Almost all

the leaders agreed that they needed such unity to fight Mrs Gandhi's party. All this according to them was an encouraging development.

Severely indicting the Congress (I) Government's economic policy as a perversion of planned priorities, the economic resolution said that the production, prices and employment situation exposed the hollowness of the policy pursued by the Central Government. The national goal of self-reliance had been reverted and despite 30 years of planning the Centre had failed to even take the first step in transforming the economy into a modern developing one.

The resolution demanded restoration of a national policy of economic self-reliance and reversal of fiscal, monetary and investment policies which had been encouraging multi-national corporations and monopoly houses at the expense of the poor and the working classes. Demanding adequate supply of essential commodities to consumers at reasonable prices the resolution said that there ought to be an increase in the production of mass consumption goods and expansion of employment opportunities. Excise levies on all essential commodities should be drastically reduced.

It also called for a change in the priorities of production of goods of mass consumption and for subsidised supply of essential commodities. It demanded that the right to work be recognized as one of the Fundamental Rights in the Constitution. The resolution urged the Centre to ensure minimum wages to farm workers and offer remunerative prices for agriculture produce through State agencies. Speedy implementation of land reform legislation and availability of cheap credit and supply of farm inputs to peasants were also demanded. Scrapping of anti-labour policies of the Centre was sought in the resolution.

The resolution called for effective measures to put a stop to continuing attacks on scheduled castes and tribes, religious minorities and weaker sections of society. The conference emphasized the need for a concerted programme of action and mobilization of masses all over the country to force the Centre to concede the demands. It appealed to those in the ruling party who were distressed at the way their party was functioning to support these demands.

The resolution attacked the Congress (I) Government for unleashing forces responsible for the rampant inflation and said that even a higher production of a commodity did not lead to a fall in prices. The Congress (I) Government allowed big landlords and wholesalers to fleece consumers and cultivators. The economic and industrial policies of the Centre had worsened the unemployment situation. It had allowed the unbridled import of industrial goods by bowing to the dictates of the IMF. It had scuttled the food-for-work programme which provided work for the rural poor. The resolution demanded revival and expansion of the food-for-work programme.

It ridiculed the Centre's policy of lowering prices of luxury goods and raising the prices of essential articles. It had also followed a discriminatory policy relating to the tax burden on the rich and the poor. The Congress (I) Government's policies had inflicted increasing misery on the working class while the narrow upper stratum secured control of the State machinery giving

rise to widespread political corruption, a steady expansion of the parallel economy of black money, and the growing rule of money power in the elections. The resolution blamed the Centre's policies for pushing the nation into chaos where casteism, communalism and separatism were vitiating the political atmosphere in the country. Manifestations of popular discontent against the Centre's arbitrary acts were denounced as regionalism and anti-national. It accused the Congress (I) of making opportunistic use of divisive forces for its own partisan purposes.

Colourful Start

The conference, which sat for just over three hours on Saturday, got off to a colourful start when the Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister, Mr N. T. Rama Rao, clad in saffron dhoti and kurta with his bandaged left hand in a sling, walked into the hall. Chief Ministers and Opposition leaders rushed up eagerly to greet him.

Mr Farooq Abdullah, Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, was heard saying "God has saved you. You must take care and arrange for your security. We are also doing that". Mr Jyoti Basu led Mr Rama Rao to his seat. It was in Mr Rama Rao's presence that the resolution was adopted condemning the dastardly attack on his life.

The conference heard the Telugu Desam general secretary, Mr P Upendra, describe how the young assassin had shouted "Indira Gandhi Zindabad" while trying to stab the Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister. The resolution termed the incident a serious matter and deplored the violence and recklessness instigated by the Congress (I) in the country.

The third resolution adopted during the day related to assistance to States affected by natural calamities. The resolution recommended an alternative procedure for provision of Central assistance during calamities and demanded that a permanent team be formed in the Agriculture Ministry which would rush to the site within 48 hours to make a general survey of the damage.

It wanted the Centre to accept reports prepared by States on the damage and assistance required. The resolution demanded that the existing limitation in granting assistance be removed, and suggested that the financial assistance should not be deducted from the plan allocations of States. The resolution was drafted on the recommendation of the Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and his Government's "disturbing experience" regarding Central allocation of assistance following two devastating cyclones in his State.

Leaders of major political parties were unanimous that the Calcutta conclave had broadened the base of understanding between the Opposition parties. What was more significant was the admission that the conclave had helped democratic parties to build bridges of understanding with Left forces. The leaders felt that the Leftists and others had agreed on joint action on various issues. There had been total agreement on the need to unite against Mrs Gandhi. It was felt that serious efforts had been made to find areas of agreement on the basis of which "We can function unitedly and establish

credibility in the eyes of the people". The leaders hoped that it would be possible to put one candidate against the Congress (I) in such constituency if the same understanding continued.

Consensus

The Janata-party-led United Front leaders said that a consensus had been reached in merging the five constituents of the Front into a single party. The merger would however, be finalized only after Mr H. M. Bahuguna, the Democratic Socialist Party leader and a prominent leader of the Front, returned from the USA next month.

Leaders of democratic as well as Left parties appreciated the need for a co-ordinated programme of action of the Opposition and felt that the Opposition could not confine itself to economic and national issues but move together for electoral purposes. As a proof of co-ordinated action they referred to the proposed holding of a national seminar in early March on world peace and the defence of national sovereignty. The seminar will be organized by some constituents of the United Front and Left parties. Janata leaders are prepared to forgive and forget the Left parties for toppling their Government in 1979.

The regional parties like the DMK, National Conference and Telugu Desam have conveyed to the United Front leaders that they were friends of the Front and a very close to its ideals. However, the proposal for seat adjustments in the parliamentary elections was open to negotiations. These regional parties are of the view that the allotment of seats should be made strictly on the basis of an Opposition party's strength and under no circumstances the Opposition votes should split. Most of the Opposition party leaders were unanimous in their desire to bring the Lok Dal and the BJP to their fold provided the BJP severed its links with the RSS. Their inclusion would bring about a clear demarcation between the Opposition and Congress (I). "Oneness of thought and victory should be the motto of the Opposition. We should carry the torch of unity throughout the country", Mr Rama Rao had told the leaders of all Opposition parties.

Amidst the talk of unity and joint programmes some of the leaders pointed out that there was a tendency among a few Opposition parties to embarrass non-Congress (I) Governments. Mr P. Upendra, general secretary, Telugu Desam, pointed out the need for a code of ethics to be observed by the participating parties. Any attack on the non-Congress Governments by any Opposition party would only help Congress (I). This should stop.

Calcutta Mass Meeting

Calcutta THE SUNDAY STATESMAN in English 15 Jan 84 pp 1, 7

[Text] ADDRESSING a massive gathering at Brigade Parade Ground Calcutta on Saturday, leaders of 18 Opposition parties called upon the people to rally behind them to save the country from economic and political disaster. They criticized the "oppressive" economic policies of the ruling Congress (I) at the Centre and its alleged attempts at subverting the democratic process.

Mrs Gandhi's slogan of "garibi hatao" had "proved hollow", with the result that an increasing number of people had been pushed below poverty line they said. Facing an economic crisis the Prime Minister was trying to cover up her failures by resorting to various devious means. The ruling party they alleged, was inciting communal feelings and encouraging separatist elements to divert the people's attention from the spiralling price rise and unemployment. Mr Jyoti Basu, Chief Minister of West Bengal presided. This was the open session of the Opposition conclave being held in Calcutta.

Mr Farooq Abdullah, Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, said that the Kashmiris had understood the hollowness of Mrs Gandhi's "garibi hatao" slogan since 1975. The Kashmiris did not have adequate water supply, leave alone food. For the past few months, the National Conference had been trying to provide relief to the poor, which the Congress (I) could not tolerate. It was trying to brand the conference "anti-national". "My flag is red-soaked in poor man's blood", announced Mr Abdullah. None of the Congress (I)'s tricks can dislodge us"

Reacting sharply to Mrs Gandhi's statements against his Government at the recently-concluded Congress session in Calcutta, Mr Abdullah said that every Kashmiri believed he was an Indian. "We are the first to be hit by the Pakistani bomb in the event of an attack and we will be the first to strike back". He said not a single Congress (I) member's house had been destroyed by fire in Kashmir. Neither had their supporters been put in jail. Instead, the National Conference supporters had been beaten up by the police, stones had been thrown at them and yet they were criticized as "anti-national"

He argued that there had been trouble at cricket Test matches in Calcutta and Kanpur; the police had fired during the DCM football tournament in Delhi; yet some trouble at the Srinagar cricket match had been blown out of proportion and condemned as an "anti-national" activity.

During his speech, it was announced that fresh trouble had broken out in Kashmir Mr Abdullah said that all these were the pretexts of the Congress (I) Government to topple the non-Congress (I) Government in Kashmir. He appealed to all Opposition parties to remain united against all machinations of the Centre. Mr Abdullah entertained the gathering by joining in the inaugural chorus.

Mr N T Rama Rao, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh who was running temperature, came with his injured left-arm in a sling. He said religious fanatics, black-marketers, corrupt administrative officers and political leaders with changing loyalties had brought the country to ruin. Misuse of powers by the Centre had brought the country to such a state. The warnings in Punjab and Assam showed that the Centre could not look after the States' development. He spoke of a new "revolutionary zeal" for development of the States and fight injustices of the Centre.

Mr R K Hegde, Chief Minister of Karnataka, said that a large number of people, opposed to the Congress (I) policies, had voted for the Congress (I) because the Opposition parties were disunited. The Congress (I), he said, had now no

popular support. Its attempts to remove from power the non-Congress (I) Governments could not succeed. Buying off MLAs or kidnapping Harijan leaders to force them to defect from the Janata Party in his State would only expose and weaken the Congress (I).

Mr Sharad Pawar, president of the Congress (S) said that whenever anybody referred to any problem such as the price rise, corruption in the administration or inefficiency of a Government, she said it was a global phenomenon. He said the Centre was not the zamindari of the Nehru family. The Opposition was united to launch a country-wide movement against the price rise, he added.

Mr Jyoti Basu reminded the people that the fight for democracy was one and indivisible. If the Opposition parties fighting for democracy did not stand united, Mrs Gandhii would crush them one after another, he warned. He pledged to stand by the Governments of Mr Abdullah and Mr Hegde in the event of an attack on them by the Centre and hoped that the Karnataka and the Jammu and Kashmir Chief Ministers would support other non-Congress (I) Governments.

The Chief Minister of West Bengal said that the State had experiences of Central attack on the United Front Governments in 1967 and 1969. There had been a time when the Left parties had been alone in their protest against these Central manoeuvrings. Several other parties now shared the same concern, Mr Basu said.

He warned the people that the next Union budget would impose further burdens on the toiling people. The present price rise and rising unemployment, however, had already made things difficult for the ordinary people. He blamed the Centre for the rise in unemployment because planning was mainly a matter for the Planning Commission and the Centre.

Mr Basu wondered whether the Congress (I) could be called a political party, since it seemed to subsist on lies and tried to dislodge democratically-elected Governments by offering to purchase MLAs. Mrs Gandhi had pleaded ignorance, he said, whenever he had drawn her attention to attempts by her partymen to topple non-Congress (I) Governments. But, during the Congress (I) plenary session in Calcutta, Mr A. B. A. Ghani Khan Choudhuri, Railway Minister, had threatened to throw the West Bengal Government into "the sea". But Mrs Gandhi, who had had been present while the remark had been made, had not told Mr Choudhuri that this was undemocratic.

The Chief Minister was particularly severe in his criticism of Mr Pranab Mukherjee, the Union Finance Minister, who, he alleged had fed Mr Rajiv Gandhi with "false figures" about West Bengal's economy. he said he did not blame Mr Rajiv Gandhi since he was new to politics. Mr Basu challenged Mr Mukherjee to spell out why no modern industries were being set up in West Bengal and why the State received less of institutional finance than other States. Why had no new industries been set up in the State since Dr. Roy's time? he asked. Mr Mukherjee could not speak the truth because, if he did, he would be thrown out of the Union Cabinet, Mr Basu added.

Mr Chandrasekhar, Janata president, thought the Opposition aim of driving Mrs Gandhi out of power was reasonable because her policies had not only reduced the people to extreme hardships but had also spelt disaster for the country's future. Despite the propaganda on the radio and the television, it was not secret to the outside world that about six million children were victims of malnutrition in the country.

The Janata chief also accused the Prime Minister of encouraging communal forces. She branched as anti-national and communal everybody who did not support her policies. Referring to Mrs Gandhi's tirades against Mr Abdullah, Mr Chandrasekhar remarked, "She is nobody to certify who is a Hindusthani and who a patriot". Gandhiji had told the people that they would strengthen his hand if they improved the lot of the poor. But Mrs Gandhi thought that helping the country meant only helping her. "This is a false Gandhi", Mr Chandrasekhar remarked.

He also warned the people againsts the Prime Minister's alleged intention of imposing the Emergency again. She had wooed the voters in 1980, saying that it was a mistake she would never commit again. But if she tried to do it this time, she would meet with the strongest opposition. The Janata president said that the Centre seemed worried about how the non-Congress (I) Governments spent their money. But would Mrs Gandhi explain how she, herself, was spending the Rs 5,000-crores loan from the IMF? he asked. How was it that the "bad debt" of the Centre had reached a staggering Rs 3,000 crores? While the prices of necessities for the ordinary man were spiralling, the prices of luxuries such as a television set and motor car were being slashed.

Mr E.M.S. Namboodiripad, CPI-(M) general secretary, said that Mrs Gandhi had recently propounded a theory that the prices could not but rise with growth and development. This, he said, was true of the Capitalist economies. According to him, the conclave did not aim at toppling any Government--not even of Mrs Gandhi's. The parties, while disagreeing on certain aspects, agreed to oppose her policies which were running the country.

Mr Indrajit Gupta, CPI M.P., said that defeating Mrs Gandhi was not the clue to solving unemployment and checking the price rise. Those opposing her policies must evolve alternative approaches and press for in change through mass movements. He announced that the conclave had decided to support the indefinite strike in the jute industry call from January 16.

Mr Nripen Chakravorty, Chief Minister of Tripura, accused the Congress (I) of trying to foment trouble in his State by encouraging separatist and extremist elements. He described the Congress (I) as the "worst terrorist party" in the country. Several other speakers, including Syed Mir Kasim (DSP), Mr Chandrajit Yadav (Janavedi Dal) and Mr Ramoowalia (Akali Dal), also accused Mrs Gandhi of investigating communities to fight each other in Punjab and in other parts of the country. Mr Ramoowalia alleged that the Centre was behind the terrorist killings in Punjab and also the Khalistan agitation.

Basu Briefs Press

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 16 Jan 84 pp 1, 9

[Text] THE Opposition coclave at its concluding session in Calcutta on Sunday adopted a resolution warning the Congress (I) that further efforts to topple democratically elected Governments headed by other parties would be resisted with the "united might of the Indian people".

Apart from passing the resolution of the Congress (I)'s attempts to destabilize non-Congress (I) Governments, the conference adopted four other resolutions. They were on the Punjab situation. Scheduled Castes and Tribes backward classes and minorities of the impending jute strike and the Granada Television Company's film on Netaji.

The operative parts of the economic resolution, which was adopted on Saturday was discussed on the last day of the conference. There are 11 demands and a programme of action to mobilize the people behind them in the next three months.

Post of Governor

Mr Jyoti Basu, who briefed the Press, said that during the discussion on the resolution on the Congress (I)'s attempts to destabilize non-Congress (I) State Governments, the role of the Governor was mentioned by many delegates. There was a suggestion to make the Governor's post an elected one. He said these proposals required further discussions.

He demanded that Governors be appointed in consultation with State Governments. He recalled that the appointment of the West Bengal Governor was announced only a day before his arrival in Delhi from Srinagar.

Mr Basu thought that the resolution on Scheduled Castes and Tribes, backward classes and minorities was quite important. He was unhappy about the economic condition of the minorities in West Bengal, especially their employment opportunities.

Asked to comment on the demand to include the right to work as one of the fundamental rights in the Constitution, as incorporated in the economic resolution, Mr Basu said it was difficult to implement it in a non-Socialist State. But even then, he said, they should make an approach from that direction.

'Prerogative'

The resolution on attempts by the Congress (I) to topple non-Congress (I) State Governments said that the "concerted attack" launched by the Centre and the Congress (I) had now reached "frightful proportions". Officials of the Congress (I) were declaring that it was the Centre's prerogative to use any means to topple non Congress (I) Governments.

It stated that in Karnataka, the Congress (I) was bribing legislators to purchase them. The office of the Governor was being used to "browbeat" the Hegde Government. The "operation topple" had taken a dangerous turn in Kashmir where the Congress (I) had resorted to violence to destabilize the State Government. The Andhra Pradesh, Tripura and West Bengal Governments had also been under attacks and the recent AICC(I) session in Calcutta had been used to denigrate West Bengal's Left Front Government.

The Centre was preventing the Andhra Government from fulfilling its commitments to the people by withholding assent to the Bill passed by the State legislature seeking to abolish the Upper House.

Punjab

The resolution on Punjab regretted that the suggestions of the Delhi conclave had been ignored by the Centre because of "narrow political considerations". It said that the situation in that State made it "incumbent on all political parties" to "strongly condemn all acts of violence and communal killings, particularly dastardly murders of innocent people" and to respect the sanctity of places of worship and denounce attempts to desecrate such places or to harbour killers there".

It reiterated the demand for a tripartite meeting on the Punjab situation to reach an amicable solution.

It was learnt that the resolution on the Punjab situation led to differences between the Akali Dal and the CPI(M) at the drafting stage. The differences arose over incorporation of the clause condemning violent activities which the Akalis resented. The CPI(M), however, insisted that the clause be inserted in the resolution.

The conclave expressed concern over the situation which had compelled 200,000 jute mill workers of West Bengal to resort to an indefinite strike from Monday. It regretted that the Centre had not intervened in the dispute. The workers' demands were justified and the millowners were adamant.

Party Leaders Comment

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 16 Jan 84 p 9

[Text] LEADERS of some Left, democratic and regional Opposition parties who attended the fourth Opposition conclave in Calcutta, felt that the most significant outcome of the conference was that it had been able to chalk out a "plan of action" and had not confined itself to mere drafting of resolutions. For the first time, they claimed, the Opposition had jointly drawn up such a plan "to protect the interests of the country and the people".

They agreed that the prospect of Opposition unity and an electoral understanding between these parties had become a little brighter.

Eighteen Opposition parties, despite different political ideologies, had been able to make an identical approach to national issues. What was unique was that the parties had spoken in one voice from the conclave's common platform on alleged attempts to destabilize non-Congress(I) Governments, the price rise, growing unemployment and the turmoil in Punjab. The leaders pointed out that even the Akalis had shown courage by wholeheartedly supporting a resolution on Punjab which condemned communal killings and shelter for killers in places of worship.

Although the electoral strategy for the coming parliamentary elections was not discussed in detail at the three-day conference, all the parties informally met to explore the possibility of electoral alliances and adjustments so that the Opposition votes were not split. In fact, Mr Rama Rao's statement that he would try his best to bring the BJP to the common platform of the Opposition was viewed by some participants as an endeavour to make it a well-knit and formidable force at the polls.

The BJP

Many democratic and Left parties, specially the CPI(M), CPI and the Janwadi Party have strong reservations about the move of the Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister, Mr N. T. Rama Rao. In fact, some of their leaders said that they considered the BJP a thoroughly communal party. Its induction, according to them, would weaken the Opposition. Any electoral alliance or adjustment with the BJP was unacceptable to them. However, they did not consider the Lok Dal, the other partner of the BJP in the National Democratic Alliance, unacceptable. This was made clear by Mr Jyoti Basu at the Press conference held after the conclusion of the conference.

Janata leaders, on the other hand, feel that there was need for an electoral understanding with the BJP as, otherwise, this would give an edge to the Congress (I). They referred to the recent Lok Sabha and Assembly by-election results, and said that the Opposition polled more votes than the Congress (I) but had lost many seats because of the absence of an electoral understanding or adjustment with non-Congress(I).

The conference stressed, for the first time, that there was an "imperative need for a concerted action" on all Opposition parties to thwart undemocratic actions of the Congress(I). Any isolated or sporadic attempt would not bear fruit. At his Press conference Mr Jyoti Basu announced that representatives of the Opposition parties would meet in Delhi late this month to work out the details of a joint programme of action outlined in the conclave [resolutions].

Stress on Issues

CPI(M) leaders said that the most encouraging development at the conference was that the Opposition polity was becoming issue-oriented. Even the regional and non-left Opposition parties, which some months ago had strong reservations about an expansion of the public distribution system, were supporting the CPI(M)'s stand in favour of such expansion because of the growing hardship of the poor. They also welcomed Mr Rama Rao's suggestion that the non-Congress(I)

Chief Ministers should evolve a common approach before they met Mrs Gandhi at the next Chief Ministers' conference.

Another Leftist leader said that the fact that the Opposition conclave in Calcutta had accepted a programme of mass agitation was an indication of the growing influence of the Left in national politics. It was increasingly being realized by different political parties that it would not be possible for them to gather support without a populist programme.

Socialism

They pointed out that even the Congress(I) realized this. It had adopted resolutions in the recent AICC(I) session in Calcutta describing socialism as its ultimate goal. The difference between the Congress(I) and the Opposition, they said, was that while the Congress(I) had achieved the objective "on paper" and the AICC(I) session was nothing but a "mela" from which nothing positive had emerged, the Opposition conclave had decided on a programme of action.

Some Opposition leaders confided that electioneering was kept strictly out of the purview of the conclave lest an impression was created in the public mind that the Opposition parties were trying to come together only for the sake of removing Mrs Gandhi without an alternative programme. Such a move would be nothing better than the Janata experiment with which the people were disillusioned, they feel.

Mr E.M.S. Namboodiripad, the general secretary of the CPI(M), felt that the political parties were making a mistake by confining their activities to election alone. He thought that the Calcutta conclave had been able to achieve something qualitatively different from the gains of the earlier three conclaves. It had decided to go to the "grassroots", while the appeal of the other three conclaves was restricted to educated people with political maturity.

Marxist Stand

Both Mr Namboodiripad and Mr Basavapunniah claimed that the Marxists were not trying to gain any narrow political advantage out of the conclaves. They were not yet sure what sort of an electoral adjustment would emerge from the attempts at political unity. A leader of the United Front said that in the event of an alliance between the Left Front and the United Front the Marxists might gain in stature but they would have to depend on non-Left parties for votes in the areas where the CPI and the CPI(M) were not strong. He was confident that a joint United Front and Left Front would be a formidable political force even if it left out the National Democratic Alliance.

A leader of the DSP found it "nothing wrong" if the people decided to vote for the Left. He did not think that CPI(M)'s withdrawal of support from the Janata Government in 1979 should be an impediment for an alliance.

Another leader, belonging to the Janvadi party, appreciated the "respect" that the CPI(M) had shown to smaller parties in the conclave. He pointed out that there were "progressive" elements in Janata and those who were opposed to an alliance with the Marxists were a minority.

PAPER REPORTS CPI-M OFFENSIVE AGAINST CPI

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 16 Jan 84 p 4

[Text] TRIVANDRUM, Jan 15--On 28 December Cochin witnessed a massive anti-war march and rally organised by the Left and Democratic Front of Kerala which consists of the CPI(M) CPI, RSP, Congress (S) and others. Though it may be taken as one of the many such events taking place all over the world today, this had many undercurrents. It was part of a nation-wide CPI (M) political offensive, planned in a calculated way to contain the CPI and humiliate it.

A barrage of articles and write ups appeared in 'Deshabhimani' the Malayalam daily organ of CPI (M) recently, praising the Soviet peace initiatives and emphasising the need to mobilise people's support to these. Mrs Indira Gandhi's peaceful foreign policy has been supported with no reservation and offered CPI (M)'s support to it. Explaining this new line E.M.S Namboodiripad said that they are gearing their party all over India for launching massive peace campaign.

One might wonder what happened to the CPI(M) now, who always kept themselves at a safe distance from the peace movement all these years. In these days when they were toeing the Chinese line and Macism they considered peace movement as revisionist. They denounced the Soviet Union as collaborationist as it pursued a policy of peaceful co-existence. It is a welcome thing that the CPI(M) has changed their line and adopted a positive approach to Soviet Union and peace movement.

But the crafty political game behind this new change is quite embarrassing. If it is the noble cause of fighting for world peace which inspired the CPI (M), then everybody will be happy about it. But this has other motives which are not so noble.

To the great embarrassment of the CPI in Kerala, the CPI (M) took a unilateral decision to hold this peace rally, decided its date and venue and announced it. The other partners of the LDF, as usual, were not much bothered about it because they always stood in the forefront of peace campaign, even when the CPI (M) were against it. The embarrassed CPI soon approached the CPI(M) and expressed its desire to join it. By then the CPI (M) went too far ahead with State-wide preparations. Finally when they allowed the CPI to join the peace rally, the CPI could organise its participation only from Ernakulam district.

The other LDF partners, as usual, participated in it in a nominal manner. With their massive participation in the rally, the CPI (M) could practically eclipse the CPI and thus humiliate them. It was very difficult for the CPI to swallow this bitter pill in relation to peace campaign. All the Kerala press highlighted the anti-war rally as a CPI (M) show.

It is learnt that there were serious differences inside the CPI about the manner in which its State leadership was taken to the garden path by the CPI (M). Many felt that it was not at all necessary for the CPI to have hastily joined this CPI (M) show. They thought that the CPI could have organised on its own or with the support of others, a better peace rally, even if the CPI (M) would not have joined it. But the CPI (M) circles enjoyed the embarrassment of the CPI.

A campaign is going in Kerala within the ranks of the CPI (M), that the international Communist movement has practically recognised the CPI (M) as the only Communist Party of India. They confide in their ranks that the CPI will soon be dropped high and dry by the world Communist movement and it would spell the doom of the CPI. The recent visits of some of the top CPI (M) leaders to Moscow are pointed out as evidence to this new development.

Some of their enthusiasts declared this in some of their public meetings too. They believe that the CPI will disintegrate and many of its members will join the CPI (M), while some will become inactive and a few will join the Congress (I).

In the meantime there are more and more reports coming from districts about the physical clash between workers of CPI and CPI (M). The day before the peace rally there was a big clash at Vaikam, Kottayam district and a dozen and a half people were hospitalised with serious injuries.

Vaikam witnessed several such clashes in the recent months. Soon after the peace march there was another clash at Chadyamangalam in Quilon district. It is only a few months back in the cooperative society elections that CPI (M) joined hand with even the Congress (I) and BJP to oust the CPI from the governing bodies.

In the Bank Employees front the CPI (M) and CITU have stepped up a vigorous campaign to engineer a serious split in the AIBA in which till now they could not succeed in Kerala, though the formal split in AIBEA had taken place more than a year ago.

Trivandrum will, in the next few weeks host another significant all-India conference of a rival All India Federation of the Electricity Board Employees. The existing federation is led by CPI leader A. B. Bardhan. Another major CITU engineered split in the Trade Union front.

All these happenings, it may be recalled, are at a point of time when the All-India session at Bangalore has given the call for the merger of the AITUC and CITU. It is significant that the CITU has virtually turned down the proposal.

Political circles in Kerala add great significance to the undue importance the CPI (M) is giving to the Congress (S) and its leaders. The attempt, it is said, is to project the Congress (S) in Kerala as the second biggest party in the LDF, next only to the CPI (M). It will reduce the CPI to the third position in the front with its logical consequences on seat allotment. Moreover it will be another big humiliation to the CPI.

It is believed in the Kerala political circles that the CPI will face quite a serious crisis in the days to come, in the Left Democratic Front. Besides this is the new international line of the CPI (M), its policy towards the peace movement and the foreign policy of the Government of India will add new complications and difficulties for the CPI in the country and in relation to the international Communist movement.

The Peace and Solidarity Organisation in India also will face difficulties when the CPI-led peace campaign gains momentum and spread all over the country. It is significant when E.M.S. Namboodiripad told the press that he himself and Mr Basavapunnayya are going around the country to meet all the State committees to impress upon them the imperative need for the CPI (M) to press its entire party into action to launch a peace movement.

CSO: 4600/1468

MUSLIM NATIONAL FRONT TO PROVIDE VOTER GUIDANCE

Calcutta THE SUNDAY STATESMAN in English 15 Jan 84 p 7

[Text] NEW DELHI, Jan. 14--The Muslim National Front is planning to give guidance to voters on whom to vote for in the next general elections.

The front, a united body of Muslim political organizations in the country, was founded last month. It is going to have its first conference in Delhi, in February, after which leaders will approach either the Congress (I) or the United Front to negotiate terms with them, if they wish to secure the support of their constituents in the coming poll, according to Mr Suleiman Sait, M.P. and president of the Indian Union Muslim League.

It is apparent that the Muslim National Front will agree to be the electoral ally of the side that accepts its demands for the uplift and betterment of the community. It may be recalled that prior to the 1980 elections, Mrs Gandhi had concluded a 10-point agreement with the Imam of Jama, Masjid, Syed Abdullah Bukhari, as a result of which, it is believed, Muslims in large numbers voted for the Congress (I).

The point remains that the Muslim League is not in a strong position politically to influence the voting behaviour of the community. But the Indian Union Muslim League, the All-India Majlis-e-Ittehedul Muslemeen are powerful bodies in the South. The first two have considerable strength in the Kerala Assembly and the Ittehedul Muslemeen is strong in Andhra Pradesh, particularly Hyderabad. The party with some clout in the North is Muslim Majlis, but its influence is mostly limited to Uttar Pradesh.

Against this backdrop three of these parties--the Indian Union Muslim League, led by Mr Suleiman Sait; the All India Muslim Majlis led by Mr Zulfiqarullah, and the All-India Majlis-e-Ittehedul Muslemeen led by Mr Sultan Salahuddin had their first conclave here along with some of their colleagues in the beginning of December and discussed the situation prevailing in the country in general, and the "threats" faced by the Muslims in particular. They resolved unanimously that the three organizations would strive unitedly to improve matters. They met in Madras towards the end of December, and decided to form the Muslim National Front.

Further consolidation of Muslim political organizations is contemplated by leaders of these three parties. In Kerala, a move is on for the Indian Union Muslim League and the All-India Muslim League to join hands, and if they do, they will have a total of 21 members in a 140-member strong Assembly. That would give them considerable weightage to force the State Government to concede some of their demands. Right now, the All-India Muslim League is a partner of the Left Front, headed by the CPI (M), and the Indian Muslim League is in the ruling United Front headed by the Congress (I).

CSO: 4600/1479

KASHMIR CHIEF MINISTER SAYS CONGRESS-I FOMENTS TROUBLE

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 17 Jan 84 p 1

[Text] NEW DELHI, January 16--A CUT in plan and non-plan expenditure and a temporary bar on fresh government recruitment are among the measures being taken to control the rise in prices.

The Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, has instructed all Central ministries and other agencies to cut the Central non-plan expenditures by 3-per cent of the approved amount for 1983-84 and the approved plan outlay by five per cent.

The measures are part of the package of measures to which Mrs. Gandhi had made a reference in her broadcast to the nation last night on the completion of four years of her government.

She had said she shared the general concern over the price rise and assured the people that the government was doing its best to deal with the situation.

A special action committee under the cabinet secretary is monitoring the price situation and considering several steps to check prices of essential commodities. It has already taken some steps to improve the availability of edible oils.

Project Review

The cuts in expenditure will be effective for this financial year and though about ten weeks are left for it to end, it is possible to effect these cuts since it is during the last few weeks that there is a race in the government departments to spend the remaining funds in a hurry so that the targets are seen to have been achieved.

A cut of three per cent in the non-plan expenditure for 1983-84 will not be applicable to interest payments and transfers to the states.

For imposing cuts in plan expenditure, there will be a project-by-project review by a group headed by the finance secretary. The group will include representatives of the planning commission, the cabinet secretariat and the Prime Minister's secretariat.

This may involve putting off the starting of new projects and staggering of expenditures on continuing ones. It has been also decided that no funds will be allocated for financing the losses of public enterprises.

The budgetary outflow on the plan and non-plan accounts of the public enterprises will be pegged to the levels estimated in the budget. This will lead to greater pressure on these enterprises to improve their performance.

The commercial banks are being asked to continue their lending assistance to levels which are prudent as per normal banking criteria.

The government hopes that with these measures, there will be a further improvement in the price situation.

Rural Jobs

As for government recruitment, it has been decided not to create new posts for three months. The existing vacancies will not be filled up. Of course, new posts could be created in "very exceptional circumstances". The ministries can deploy the staff afresh to avoid dislocation of work.

Some of the measures have been suggested by the high-powered economic advisory council headed by Prof. Sukhmoy Chakravarty. The council had submitted a special note on the price situation to the Prime Minister. Some more measures are also expected to follow.

PTI adds: The wheat to be supplied at Rs. 150 p. per kg as part of wages in a rural landless employment guarantee programme (r'egn) announced by the Prime Minister in her broadcast last night has come into force with immediate effect.

Official sources in the rural development ministry say under the scheme a worker will be given Rs. 8.50 p. per day in cash and a kg of wheat worth Rs. 1.50 against Rs. 8 in cash and a kg of wheat worth Rs. 2 previously, totalling Rs. 10 per day.

The Prime Minister had announced the programme in her independence Day speech from the Ramparts of Red Fort in August.

The programme aims at guaranteeing employment to at least one member of every landless labour household for up to 100 days a year.

CSO: 4000/1467

MARXIST-LENINISTS FORM NEW PROLETARIAN PARTY

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 14 Jan 84 p 4

[Text] A group of Marxist-Leninists have formed yet another proletarian party named "Internationalist Workers Platform" (IWP), which has set organisation of a world proletarian revolution as its ultimate task.

The group met in New Delhi on 9 and 10 January and adopted a programme and constitution besides electing its office-bearers. Master Kheta Singh (Punjab) is elected the chairman and Mr Sajjan Kumar (Rajasthan) the general secretary. Eight other members of the central organising committee from UP, Haryana Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab and Rajasthan were also elected.

Significantly, the new party has said that it recognises the different Indian nationalities right to self-determination, though not on communal or religious basis but on the class basis so that the Union of India is based not on force but on a voluntary agreement to form a common state.

The IWP has characterised both the US and the Soviet Union as imperialists and dismissed the Soviet, Chinese, Albanian and European communist parties as also the Trotskyites and Titoists as nationalists.

According to the IWP the analysis of the Indian situation both by the established left parties like the CPI, the CPI-M, the RSP, the SUCI etc as also by the pro-Mao and pro-Teng factions of Naxalites was 'misconceived'.

While the Left had incorrectly characterised India as "an independent capitalist state led by an independent bourgeoisie" the Maoists and Tengists were wrong in characterising the state as "semi-colonial, semi-feudal".

A document adopted at the group meeting said the thesis that India was an independent capitalist society was refuted by the fact that the share of imperialist capital in the country had increased by 80 times since independence, while 40 per cent of its exports were going to meet its annual debt liabilities.

Not a single factory in India was running without imperialist capital or know-how and for all its armament and defence needs the country was relying on imperialism, it said.

While the US imperialists were controlling the finance in India, the document said, the Soviet Union was controlling the defence and other state sectors.

The document set two major tasks for the new party--establishing fraternal contacts with the Marxist-Leninists in the world and organising a proletarian movement in India.

The new party will participate in elections and will work "through peaceful means by developing a revolutionary movement, while orienting its work in a way that enables it to face up all contingencies" to establish proletarian rule in India.

CSO: 4600/1467

JANATA LEADER RULES OUT JOINING LEFTIST ALLIANCE

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 13 Jan 84 p 9

[Text] Mr Subramanian Swamy, the Janata Party leader, on Thursday ruled out the possibility of his party joining any Left democratic alliance, as had been suggested by the CPI leader, Mr Rajeshwara Rao. Mr Swamy said that Janata could never accept the CPI and the CPI(M) as its allies because they had toppled the Janata Government at the Centre at Moscow's behest.

Addressing a Press conference in Calcutta, he criticized Mr Rao's suggestion as a "Communist conspiracy" to split and weaken the Janata Party. There was no question of his party falling into such a trap. His party's past experience with the Communists was bitter. He said that Mr Rao's suggestion was curious since he had said that a section of the Janata Party would be in the proposed alliance. "Let him clearly spell out which section of the Janata Party he is talking about. This is a typical Communist game to confuse and split democratic parties. It will not succeed." he remarked.

Mr Swamy said though the Janata Party was in the five-party United Front, its presence in the Front did not have the sanction of the party's national executive. The Front, according to him, was "more a proposal than a reality". The Front might break up any day. He said that Janata Party could be a member of the United Front provided it did not distinguish between the "two mischievous superpowers"--the USA and the Soviet Union--and gave equal status and prominence to both the public and private sectors in the national economy. The party's national executive would take up the issue of its membership of the United Front after its organizational elections.

Mr Swamy was not sure whether the Opposition parties would be able to come to an adjustment among themselves in putting up a single candidate against the Congress (I) in the coming parliamentary elections. Many Opposition parties specially the BJP, had an unrealistic assessment of their own strength and made unreasonable demands for seats. It was largely owing to the BJP's arrogance and over-estimation of its strength that no electoral adjustment was possible in the last elections. In the recent by-elections, even the partners of the United Front had fought against one another. He, however, did not think that the BJP's links with the RSS would stand in the way of any possible electoral adjustment between some Opposition parties.

Mr Swamy did not attach much importance to the Opposition conclave, saying that it would produce no result. He described the conclave as a "Kumbh mela" and said that the three previous conclaves had produced no tangible results. When asked why other senior leaders of his party were attending the conclave, he replied that the Janata was a democratic and not a regimented party.

CSO: 4600/1463

RAJIV, OTHERS ISSUE STATEMENTS ON KASHMIR

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 17 Jan 84 p 4

[Text] Congress-I working president Kamrapan Tripathi, general secretary Rajiv Gandhi, AICC-I minority cell convener Shafi Qureshi and Congress-I MF from Jammu and Kashmir G L Dogra have condemned the State Government for killing Congress-I workers and trying to suppress and terrorise "pro-India" elements in the valley.

In separate statements on Monday, the leaders have urged the Centre to take effective steps to curb the spate of violence unleashed by Dr Farooq Abdullah's Government.

Talking to newsmen, Mr Tripathi said the actions of the State Government could not be tolerated any more. He wanted the people to realise that Jammu and Kashmir was a very sensitive border State where secessionist and anti-social elements were raising their ugly head.

He regretted that all the Opposition parties and the Press as well were dancing to the tune of Dr Farooq Abdullah who was all the time saying that the Congress-I was trying to topple his Government. But nobody was trying to know what was actually under Dr Farooq Abdullah.

Nothing was being done for the good of the people. The financial allocations made by the Centre for the welfare of the State people were being frittered away. These were the reasons for the Congress-I demonstrations, he said.

Mr Gandhi expressed distress over the killing of a number of his partymen in Kashmir valley.

He said he was shocked to note that a 18-year old boy, Shaukat Ahmed, was killed at Bijbehara by a police bullet. "I am grieved that the boy, who, I learnt, was the only son of his parents and whose father is still in jail, became target of police brutality."

In a statement, AICC-I general secretary G K Moopanar claimed that nine persons were killed in Jammu and Kashmir as a result of police firing or lathi-charge.

The list of names of the people killed, details of injured arrested and list of Congress-I workers whose property were either looted or set on fire on 14 January by police and National Conference activists were released by Mr Moopanar.

Mr Qureshi told newsmen that Congress-I men and others holding aloft the national flag and shouting "Azad Hindustan Zindabad" and "Congress-I Zindabad" were getting bullets in their chests while those raising slogans against the country and "Pakistan Zindabad" were allowed to go scotfree

Only a firm and stern action by the Government could save the country.

Mr Dogra said it was ironical that the blood of innocent people should have been shed hardly within a week of the assurance given by Dr Abdullah and his mother, Begum Adbullah, to Mrs. Gandhi that every effort was being made to maintain law and order in the State.

Mr K C Pant MP, has said that the police connived at the terror unleashed by the National Conference goondas and anti-social elements and Dr Abdullah must assume full responsibility for the situation created in the State.

The Communist Party of India (CPI) warned that any hasty action by Mrs Gandhi, with regard to the Farooq Abdullah Government was "fraught with serious consequences in such a sensitive border state of the country."

In a statement, CPI general secretary C Rajeswara Rao said any such action would only help the separatist and disruptive forces in the State and elsewhere.

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah on Monday said his government would 'put down with a heavy hand' incidents of lawlessness that Congress-I was indulging in the State.

'I don't want to turn the State into a battlefield but at the same time I cannot sit back and see democracy crushed in the country' he told a press conference in the Capital before leaving for his State.

Dr Abdullah had arrived in New Delhi on Sunday from Calcutta where he had been attending the opposition conclave.

'I have shown great restraint but 'enough is enough', he said.

The Chief Minister charged that the Congress-I agitation in his State was being controlled and guided 'from the AICC-I headquarters', in New Delhi.

Dr Abdullah said if the Congress-I continued its present form of agitation he would not hesitate to seek the assistance of central forces, including para military forces. He however, ruled out the possibility of deploying his own party workers to retaliate.

ALL-INDIA NATIONAL INTEGRATION CONVENTION MEETS

Calcutta THE SUNDAY STATESMAN in English 15 Jan 84 p 1

[Text] NEW DELHI, Jan. 14--The three-day All-India National Integration Convention, which concluded here today demanded that the Constitution and the election laws be amended to promote national integration and safeguard the freedom and sovereignty of the country, reports PTI.

The convention which was sponsored by the Indian Society for Social Democracy in an 11-point charter of recommendations, also called for evolving a code of conduct for citizens in all walks of life, political parties in particular, making it obligatory on their part not to indulge in activities which in any way tended to jeopardize efforts for national integration.

The convention also suggested that suitable reforms be introduced in the educational system so as to focus attention on national integration in the schools, colleges, universities and other educational institutions.

For achieving this objective, it felt, the curriculum should be amended and such text books introduced as would promote national integration and communal harmony.

The convention also recommended that a permanent machinery to institutionalize the movement for promoting and strengthening the struggle for national integration be set up all over the country.

It decided to organize dissemination of information through the mass media among the people of the country in such ways as to inculcate the spirit of integrity, unity and fraternity among the citizens in a scientific, systematic and effective manner. It also called for effective steps against a section of the media which indulged in promoting inter-ethnic tensions and violence.

Mr Rajiv Gandhi, Congress (I) general secretary, while delivering the valedictory address, said he would like the Opposition parties to have a consensus on promoting national integration, since "both external and internal forces, which wanted to keep the country weak were raising their heads again".

If India was to move forward and be united, it would have to remain integrated and this could only be brought about through economic development, he said.

During his hour-long speech, Mr Gandhi touched upon various topics ranging from Pakistani threat to India's security the Akali Dal's agitation, the Assam problem and what was going on in Jammu and Kashmir.

he said there had been no serious discussion either in the country, or on the mass media, on how to solve problems facing the country and take it ahead"

On Jammu and Kashmir, Mr Gandhi said conditions in this "delicate area" were not smooth. He said that during last year's Assembly elections in the State, the National Conference had come to power by using all its forces. The Congress (I), he said, had documentary proof of malpractice by the party at the poll. Still, it accepted the defeat, he added.

CSO: 4600/1479

AASU HOLDS CONVENTION IN GAUHATI, DECISIONS NOTED

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 16 Jan 84 p 4

[Text] GAUHATI, Jan 15--The Assam movement on the vexed foreign national issue took a new turn as the All Assam Students Union (AASU) decided to take initiative to form a regional party in order to fight the Congress-I Government in the State on a political level.

The two-day closed door convention, sponsored by AASU held at Assam agriculture university campus on 11-12 January, decided to take the initiative in forming a united regional political force in Assam.

The convention held for the first time since the agitation started was comprised of the organisations and individuals connected with the agitation directly or indirectly. Reportedly about 740 people were invited by AASU but only 446 people turned up including 100 odd from AASU

No delegate for Cachar and north Cachar was present at the convention although about 39 people were invited.

The convention felt that the political power in the State has to be captured if the foreign national issue is to be solved and the Assamese nationality saved.

The Speakers were unanimous on forming a regional party so as to capture power. It is learnt however, that some participants criticised AASU for boycotting the last February election of the State Assembly which paved the way for easy installation of a Cong-I Ministry in the State.

The prominent personalities taking part in the convention included Mr Jogen Hazrika, ex-CM of Assam, Dinesh Goswami, MP, Purnanarayan Sinha H K Bhattacharja, ex-DIG, Prafulla Barua, the editor of Dainik Janambhumi. Two delegates from Assam Association of London were also present.

However the presence of two delegates from Panjab university and one from a Maharashtra Yuba Chatra Sangharsh Vahini was the most conspicuous as they were the only non-Assames delegates. It is to be noted that the convention was confined to Assames organisations only as was declared earlier.

The convention adopted 12 resolutions, AASU general secretary Bharagu Kumar Phukan told the reporters. He said that the convention reiterated its determination to continue the agitation till an acceptable solution was reached.

DELHI OBSERVES REPUBLIC DAY IN MOOD OF OPTIMISM

Madras THE HINDU in English 25 Jan 84 p 9

[Article by G. K. Reddy]

[Text]

NEW DELHI, Jan. 25.

The 35th Republic Day which India celebrates tomorrow with the customary gaiety is regarded as a good occasion for counting the blessings of the country's freedom from foreign rule.

But in the present atmosphere of controversy and criticism of the country's performance, an assessment is being made by some experts of the plus and minus points of India's achievements and failures on the economic front, leaving politics to politicians to reckon whether the leadership has lived up to the people's expectations.

Greatest achievement: The greatest achievement of the country since Independence, according to these experts, has been on the food front with the agricultural production having nearly trebled from 45 to 50 million tonnes in 1947 to 135 to 140 million tonnes this year within a span of three and a half decades.

But it is pointed out that the population has doubled during this period from 350 millions at the time of Independence to nearly 700 millions at present.

There is need for a second breakthrough on the agricultural front to extend the green revolution from wheat to rice production to cross the target of 200 million tonnes by the end of this decade. Despite the tardy beginning during the fifties and sixties, the country has certainly done well in achieving self-sufficiency and building up buffer stocks to cope with droughts.

Good industrial base: The second most important achievement has been in establishing a reasonably good industrial base and improving the basic infrastructure. The country is able to manufacture capital goods, export machinery and meet its requirements in many spheres.

But there are still some critical gaps like power shortages, paucity of raw materials, transport bottlenecks, higher manufacturing costs and vagaries of licensing procedures impeding industrial expansion, although a reasonable growth rate has been maintained

despite these limitations.

The impressive strides made on both the agricultural and industrial fronts have helped to raise the standard of life as witnessed by what is called the bicycle revolution, although roughly one-third of the population is still below the poverty line with little hope of any marked improvement in the miserable levels of its subsistence in the foreseeable future.

The rate of saving has increased substantially over the years and there is enough capital accumulation to meet the rupee requirements if only the Government knows how to utilise it prudently for development to provide for the social betterment of the poorer sections.

Reservoir of skilled manpower: The general spread of scientific education, through the establishment of more technical institutes and research laboratories, and opening of new universities and colleges, has enabled India to build up a vast reservoir of skilled manpower, the third largest in the world, to carry forward its development programmes, despite many bottlenecks in its utilisation.

The country now exports nuclear physicists, computer specialists, metallurgical experts, medical doctors, airline pilots and technicians, general educationists and hospital nurses, leading to a frequent outcry against brain drain. Actually, there is more brain left in India even after this steady drain.

Slow growth rate: The country's failures on the economic front, listed by these experts, include a slow growth rate, inability to control prices and check inflation, the staggering population explosion, great deterioration in the quality of administration, spread of corruption to all walks of life, bad management of core sectors like coal, steel, power, railways, heavy engineering, banking and insurance, and politicisation of trade union movements leading to widespread labour unrest and frequent strikes with enormous losses in production.

The political system, it is pointed out, has been allowed to run down to such an extent that an entire generation of politicians have become wholly dependent on the spoils of

party fund collections.

The critics who are generally accustomed to taking only a dim view of the capacity of the Government to shed the hang-overs of the past are nevertheless impressed by the new psychology of change. In its policies, the readiness to learn through trial and error to be able to avoid past mistakes. The days of doctrinaire approach to development are over, but the high incidence of taxation that inhibits enterprises and retards the incentive for growth continues to distort the economy and encourage black money operations.

Successive Finance Ministers have failed to comprehend the full dimensions of the country's economic challenges by remaining prisoners of their prejudices or pendering to the whims and fancies of their ignorant party colleagues who think it is fashionable to talk of socialism even when they continue to be the beneficiaries of the spoils of capitalism.

Restrictive attitude: It is only now that the policy-makers at the higher levels have begun to realise the great damage done by their restrictive attitudes which have done considerable harm by making the country lose many precious years in critical areas of development.

If there is growing confidence now in the ability of the Government to first check and then reverse this self-defeating trend set by an excessive reliance on controls and a readiness to put up with all the corrupt practices that go with them, it is because the stage has been reached when the country has to choose between rapid progress and senseless stagnation.

The country is now at the kind of cross-roads that compel it to choose its direction sooner than later, lest it is left far behind in the remorseless race for development. The indications are that the right choices will be made at least in some selective spheres soon. And at any rate the current mood here is one of modest optimism.

CSO: 4600/1475

IRAN

'ISLAMIC THOUGHT' CONFERENCE ENDS, ISSUES STATEMENT

Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 6 Feb 84 p 2

[Text] The second Islamic Thought Conference continued yesterday morning, attended by dignitaries, professors, and scholars of the Islamic revolution from within the country and abroad.

Ayatollah Khaz'ali, during a speech entitled "Divine Traditions Prevailing Over the World and Islam," said: The Glorious Koran, when discussing the laws prevailing over the world, usually uses the terms "fate," "extent," and "quantity," and refers to the rules governing human beings in terms of tradition and traditions. The laws prevailing in the world have been compiled with the ultimate in systematization; they encompass everything and everyone, and guide all beings to their fullness and fruition.

Ayatollah Khaz'ali also noted: Oh Muslims, push aside these parasites who have come to power, free the power of the Muslims, and live freely.

The ISLAMIC REPUBLIC NEWS AGENCY reported that Professor Ismail Faruqi, from America, expressed his happiness to participate in this conference. During a talk entitled "The Koran's Theory of the Human Being," in which he referred to the crimes of the two superpowers, America and the Soviet Union, he said: The Muslims of America are prepared to martyr themselves for the establishment of God's government.

explaining the Koran's theory of the human being, he continued his talk concerning life in the hereafter and the vice-regency of the human being on earth.

In this same regard, Professor Faruqi considered morality to be the most important human characteristic, and he cited faith as the most important factor in the prevention of sin and error.

He stressed that Muslims must make more organized efforts at the international level, and avoid nationalism and patriotism; it is only through this that Muslims will be able to attain high glory and honor.

In conclusion, referring to the circulation of dehumanizing mechanisms in America and Europe, he said: Today, because of the circulation of new theories, Europe has transformed the human being into an animal, and no importance is given to spiritual issues. For this reason, theft, murder, rape, and other types of crimes have become very common in these countries. Islam, meanwhile, by attaching importance to spiritual and material affairs, guides the human being to salvation, and establishes justice in human societies.

Then Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed Mahmud Hashemi, one of Iraq's combatant clergy, in the course of a talk entitled "The Face of the Islamic Economy from the Point of View of the Koran," discussed the values and aims of Islam.

During his remarks, he said: According to these criteria, human beings have primacy, superiority, and nobility over all the creations of nature and the material world; they attain to the exalted position of the creator's surrogate in the world. They are beings with the qualities of awareness, yearning for the truth, will, and the capability of making choices, which qualify them for the position of God's vice-regent. This is the highest form of humanism and psychology, which exists in no other ideology.

He added: On this basis, all human relations are based solely on submission to God and in the service of his vice-regency.

In another portion of his talk, he explained in detail the nature of property in an economic system from the point of view of the Koran, economic freedom, limitations on economic freedom, Islamic taxes, their role in redistribution, and the role of the government in an Islamic economy.

Then Sheikh Tijani-Niyad, from Senegal, thanked the officials of the Islamic Republic for providing such an opportunity for the Muslims of the world to meet. Referring to the plots of world imperialism and its agents within and without, he stressed that this republic, because it relies on almighty God, is victorious.

He added: Today the Islamic Republic of Iran is the focal point of unity and solidarity for the Muslims of the world.

The correspondent for the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC NEWS AGENCY reported that the last speaker yesterday morning on the second day of the Islamic Thought Conference, Sheikh Nik 'Abd ol-'Aziz, of

Malaysia, in explaining the value of the Koran and that celestial book's role in the world of humanity, stressed the necessity for literacy education, reading and writing for Muslims, and the reading of the Koran.

In conclusion, he expressed appreciation for the effective role of Iranian combatants from the dawn of Islam to the present.

The conference's morning program ended around noon yesterday; the Muslim Shi'ite and Sunni guests from various countries of the world demonstrated their unshakable unity by performing the congregational prayer. This conference will conclude its work tomorrow with the issuance of a statement.

Afternoon Continuation of Conference

The Islamic Thought Conference came to order yesterday at noon on the second day of its program with the reading of several verses from the glorious words of God, presided over by Ayatollah Jinnati, supervisor of the Islamic Propaganda Organization and director of the Supreme Islamic Propaganda Council. The session was attended by foreign guests who participated in the ten opening ceremonies. Brother 'Abdollah Naser, a conference guest from Kenya, explained the importance of the glorious Koran in the lives of Muslims.

Another speaker, Mr Mansuri, from Sierra Leone, presented a study and an analysis of the gains of the Islamic revolution in Iran and its effects on the course of political and social movements. Then brother Salimi, a guest of the Islamic Thought Conference from Sierra Leone of the Koran unit of the Islamic propaganda organization, read a paper entitled "The Teaching of the Koran" in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

In this paper, while reviewing the events of the revelation of the Glorious Koran, he discussed the views of the clergymen, great scholars, and contemporaries of the Prophet of God (Peace be Upon Him). He quoted the words of Father 'Ali (Peace be Upon Him) concerning this: The Koran is a luminous torch, whose brightness will never fail; it is a deep ocean which cannot be fathomed by the mind of man. It is the pivot-point and the center of faith, the spring of the hearts of the religious scholars and clergy and the aim and the goal of the virtuous.

In the same paper, he referred to a saying by Imam Sajjad (Peace be Upon Him), who said: If all the people of the East and the West die, I will not fear as long as I have the Koran. In another part of the paper, he referred to the accursed Pahlavi regime's aim of expelling the words of God from the lives of the people, and the plots of the shah's regime in this regard.

The ISLAMIC REPUBLIC NEWS AGENCY reported that the fourth speaker yesterday afternoon was Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohammad Bager Ansari, of the Islamic republic; he read a paper entitled "The Names and Attributes of the Glorious Koran." He introduced the paper by noting that the best method of interpreting the Koran is to apply the Koran to the time, in view of the fact that it is not enough to rely on miracles; the verses of the glorious words of God must be applied to situations, and the study of the Koran's view must be applied in this sense to every area.

The next speaker yesterday afternoon at the second Islamic Thought Conference was Dr (Mrs) Lami'ah Faruqi, from America who spoke to the audience on "Woman and the Glorious Koran."

In her speech, she compared the rights of women in Islam with women's rights under Western ideologies, especially in the family and social affairs of the Western woman today. Referring to the role of Muslim women in our country in bringing the Islamic revolution to victory and their presence beside the Muslim men in society's social and political movements, she said concerning the freedom of the woman of today in the Islamic republic: What is propounded today as women's freedom in the Islamic republic is that same true freedom which is accepted by science and logic. Previously, Iranian women showed no commitment to social issues, but the Islamic revolution has made them realize that they must be present on the political and social scene.

She also said: The Iranian woman is portrayed today all over the world as the model of the free woman described in the Koran; it is necessary that Western women emulate this model we are seeing today in the Islamic republic, and attain true liberation for themselves by understanding their problems.

The Iranian woman of today is a manifestation of a Koranic society, which must be followed by all. I am very happy as a woman on this account, and proud of myself.

According to the same report, yesterday's final speaker at the Islamic Thought Conference was Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohammad Taqi-Rahbar, an official in the political and ideological unit of the Islamic Propaganda Organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran. He read a paper of his own to the audience entitled "A Look at the Political System in the Koran."

He said: Planning and policy-making in human social affairs must be treated in accordance with necessities; this has been accepted by reason and both religious and secular law in all periods of human history. Human social systems have been understood on the basis of this necessity.

Where human prerogatives and freedoms are concerned, laws are necessary, as is a governing system that prevents chaos. The necessity for supervision is a principle that cannot be denied. The divine prophets, reformers, and committed thinkers have made this the guiding principle of their work; they have provided guidance and acted and provided leadership in society with regard to it. The place of policy and management in Islam is more prominent than it is in other religions. With a brief look at the teachings, laws, and regulations in Islam, one may affirm that political affairs may not be separated from the systematic and seamless whole of Islamic law.

At the end of his paper he studied and analyzed the concept of politics and its place in the life of a human being, the dimensions of politics in Islam, the Islamic system of politics and worship in the Koran, and the goals of politics from the point of view of the Koran. Yesterdays sessions of the Islamic Thought Conference ended with questions and answers from the audience concerning the papers and talks that had been presented.

9310

CSO: 4640/119

NON-PARTY ELECTIONS TERMED 'UNDESIRABLE'

Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 13 Jan 84 p 4

[Article by Dr. Mohammad Waseem]

[Text]

Recently President Zia has reopened an old controversy over the issue of non-party elections. He has expressed his desire to hold elections on non-party basis on the ground that there is no provision for parties in Islam. Both the Muslim League (Pagara group) and the Jamaat-e-Islami have shown willingness to contest elections even on a non-party basis, ostensibly to facilitate the process of restoration of democracy of some sort. On other hand the MRD parties and the JUP have opposed this idea on the ground that elections on non-party basis would lead to anarchy, self-aggrandisement, revival of factional politics and general corruption related to buying and selling of votes.

It is, however, clear that what is really at stake is political power, and all this bickering about non-party elections can be considered a power game by proxy. The supporters and opponents of party-based elections reflect the opinion of two different institutions or groups: the former are outside the government and therefore seek public mandate to ascend to power; the latter are already in power and going to elections means surrendering their power to the elected representatives of the people. It considers necessary, therefore, to safeguard itself against a total surrendering of political initiative to politicians by robbing

them of their organisational power base in political parties.

Even since the inception of Pakistan, its state apparatus has shown a persistent unwillingness to accommodate political parties. This has been especially true of military governments. Both the civil and military bureaucracies inherited the typical colonial contempt for political parties, which represented organised public opinion outside the state. That meant the state refused to countenance the presence of a self-conscious, assertive and mobilised society. In other words, the state of Pakistan, like its predecessors in British India, has been committed to maintenance of its monopoly over all forms of public organisation. In political parties, it saw its potential rival for power. It thus sought to dismantle their structure and corrupt their functioning wherever it had the opportunity to do so. Its own superior organisational capabilities helped it to publicly denigrate and discredit political parties inside and outside the legislatures. However, only Ayub went as far as disallowing a public role for parties in the constitution itself. This move was a non-starter. Within months of promulgation of 1962 constitution an amendment was carried through restoring parties to their full functionality.

The present regime has again taken up the issue in public. It has tried to eliminate the role of political parties from the country's politics altogether. But again like its predecessors it has found the task too difficult. The political parties have generally tended to continue as relatively coherent organisational forms of public opinion. Especially the regime

has failed to break the back of the Pakistan Peoples Party which remains a major threat to the status quo. It has tried to discredit its leadership, degrade its public image and do everything possible to eliminate its popular appeal but to no avail. The question arises what is the secret of the PPP's continued mass acceptance and the inability of the present regime to combat it successfully. For an answer, we must look outside this party, i.e. into the political system of Pakistan, and see how certain other parties passed through a phase of governmental pressure and still managed to survive.

The most glaring example is that of the Awami League. Ever since its birth in 1949, this party was persecuted by every government of Pakistan in one way or the other, except when it shared power with the Republican party under Suhrawardy's premiership. The two decades of suppression of its public functioning and a smear campaign declaring it a party of traitors finally brought it to the forefront of Pakistan politics in 1970-71. Throughout this period, the successive ruling groups failed to understand that the party had its roots in certain well-defined social groups and that the party's fortunes related to a much wider section of the society. In fact, the same is true about the Jamaat-e-Islami which was banned by Ayub Khan and which successfully fought a legal battle against its own annihilation. Similarly, the suppression of the NAP by the previous regime, though endorsed by the judiciary, only gave way to its re-emergence under the new name of NDP. All this points to a fundamental reality that the political parties are a necessary part of our political system, be it military or civilian, and that no amount of state pressure will be able to eliminate their vital role from society.

Having portrayed the basic inevitability of parties in Pakistan, we can now elaborate on the theme of non-party elections. The basic question is not whether the elections should be held on party or non-party basis but whether it is possible at all to hold elections on non-party basis.

In regards the role of political parties in general elections, their influence over the minds of the electorate, throughout the villages and towns of Pakistan cannot be

ignored. People think only in terms of parties -- their leadership, their ideologies, their rise and fall. Generations of voters have been accustomed to voting for parties. This is true both about such mass parties as the Awami League and the Pakistan Peoples Party, and elite parties such as the J. I. and NDP. Most of all, the two local bodies elections under the present regime have clearly shown that it is impossible either to bypass parties in any exercise in mass voting, or to expect 'better public behaviour' in a formally non-party election.

But then the question arises why are these things outside the conceptual framework of the government? In other words, is the government serious while 'selling' the idea of non-party elections? Is it only keeping the pot boiling till it decides which way to move? Is it, therefore, sponsoring a non-issue? Considering the fact that it is next to impossible to hold elections without parties, why is the present regime selling the non-party elections as an issue for public debates? It seems that the government is trying to keep the organisational framework of parties weak enough to be manipulated at an appropriate time and for this purpose it is injecting insecurity among them. It feels that it has only to gain from this confusion and nothing to lose. And most of all, this keeps its options open because after all a non-party election promises the return of landlords and other individuals from the elite who would represent, and fight for, safeguarding the interests of the privileged sections. It would, for example, divide the PPP into its feudal leadership on the one hand and its party cadres on the other. This strategy focuses on landlords and other higher levels of political stratum, while neglecting the massive force of the vast army of the MRD party workers. The latter would almost certainly play an active role in any elections either through demonstrating street power against it, or through participating in the electoral process -- thus tilting it in favour of their respective parties. Today's dilemma would thus re-emerge and our politics will be back to square one. Succinctly put, elections on non-party basis are not desirable in Pakistan in the 1980s, and thus all efforts in this direction are inherently futile.

EDITORIAL DISCUSSES WAYS TO REDUCE NUMBER OF POLITICAL PARTIES

Lahore NAWA-I-WAQT in Urdu 25 Jan 84 p 3

[Editorial: "Only Two Political Parties!"]

[Text] Dr Javed Iqbal, chief justice of the Lahore High Court, addressing the oath ceremony of the District Bar Association of Multan, expressed his views about having too many political parties. Political leaders may agree or disagree with him but we have to admit that this multiparty system has been a constant and negative part of our recent experience. We have to agree that, "where there are too many parties, the differences will be more intense and the clarity of our purpose will be muddled by these differences."

No matter what practice we follow, the formation of two or three strong national parties has always been emphasized. Whenever leaders gathered for a national movement, they were asked why they did not form a single party, since they had gathered on the same platform with a singleness of purpose.

There are only two possible ways to reduce the number of political parties to two or three. One, by law. Two, by following the principle of survival of the fittest. Political parties would be asked to organize at the national level and be required to get a minimum number of votes in all parts of the country. Those failing to meet this requirement would be eliminated. Even the most ardent supporter of democracy could have no objection to this method. After all, the verdict would be delivered by the common voters whose representatives, well-wishers and supporters these parties claim to be. As long as this method is not implemented, there will be no decrease in the number of political parties. Instead, new groups and factions claiming to be political parties will emerge and cause additional political unrest. Only law and order can help us. The present system of political parties splitting into smaller factions will muddle our political and national goals. The dream of a peaceful transfer of political power that Dr Javed Iqbal mentioned will not be realized by simply having elections. Neither will it help us get rid of martial law.

MALTREATMENT OF POLITICAL PRISONERS CONDEMNED

Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 13 Jan 84 p 6

[Text]

KARACHI Jan 12. The Organizing the release of all political prisoners. Committee of the Pakistan Mazdoor Kisan Party today expressed grave concern over the 'maltreatment of hundreds of political prisoners presently held in various prisons and thanas of the country and the lack of basic facilities and proper medical treatment.' The committee deplored the government's action in subjecting political prisoners to 'brutal interrogation while under detention.' It drew particular attention to the case of Sardar Shaukat Ali, General Secretary of the Mazdoor Kisan Party "who was taken to Lahore Fort on 12th October 1983 and no relative or friend has been allowed to see him since then and to that of Haji Anwar Rashid, Chairman of the Punjab MKP, who was arrested and taken to Lahore Fort four weeks ago."

A meeting held under the chairmanship of Nooruddin Serki also paid rich tributes to the "spirit of sacrifice of those MRD leaders and workers, including the MKP Chairman, Fatehyab Ali Khan who are kept in 'C' class in prison and are going through their terms of imprisonment and detention with courage and fortitude."

The committee resolved that there would be no compromise on MRD's four-point formula, the sanctity of the 1973 Constitution and the political institutions established thereunder. It also criticised the indiscriminate transfer of prisoners from one jail to another, and demanded

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PDP LEADER SPEAKS AGAINST MARTIAL LAW, DETENTIONS

Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 13 Jan 84 p 6

[Text]

LAHORE, Jan. 12: Abdul Rashid Qureshi, advocate and Central Information Secretary of the defunct Pakistan Democratic Party has said an attempt to reopen the issues settled in the 1973 Constitution would open a 'Pandora's Box' causing great harm to the federation.

Addressing a Press conference the PDP leader said the imposition of martial law on July 5, 1977 and its continuation till now and ban on political activity had caused a sense of deprivation among the people of Pakistan.

He said his party was not of the opinion that the issue of provincial autonomy determined in the constitution was insufficient and that it should be re-determined before holding of general elections in the country. He said at the time of framing of the said Constitution the leadership was in the hands of smaller provinces and the issues of provincial autonomy, provincial rights and interests were settled through mutual consultations. Differences, he said arose when the federal government clearly violated certain provisions of the constitution, and the provincial government of Baluchistan was dissolved despite the fact that it was representing majority in that pro-

vince. He said this had resulted in the resignation of the Frontier government under test. In Punjab the United Democratic Front launched a civil disobedience movement and hundreds of political leaders and workers courted arrest. He said his party was of the view that the provincial matters settled in the 1973 Constitution including the issue of provincial autonomy were not implemented.

He said it was need of the hour that all the political parties should guarantee the rights of the smaller provinces as laid down in the Constitution to remove their doubts. Further they should give an assurance to them that the rights guaranteed under the Constitution would be given to them after general elections. He said in this connection the institution of a Common Interests Council would be made a powerful and an effective body.

Replying to a question Mr. Qureshi said Miss Benazir Bhutto should not have been kept under detention because of her illness nor extension in her detention was necessitated. He demanded immediate release of all political leaders and workers and holding of general elections in the country at the earliest possible.

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MUSLIM COOPERATION DEFENSE PRODUCTION SUPPORTED

Lahore NAWA-I-WAQT in Urdu 23 Jan 84 p 10

[Editorial: "Proposal for Joint Defense Production"]

[Text] Mir Ali Ahmad Talpur, Pakistan's minister of defense, has proposed a plan for joint defense production in Islamic countries, especially the Gulf countries. He has emphasized the importance of self-reliance in the area of defense production. He has further urged that all Islamic countries accelerate measures necessary to strengthen their defense; otherwise they will face difficulties later.

While this defense proposal by our minister is important and sincere, it is by no means a new proposal. Pakistan has been a proponent of this plan for a long time. During the era of the shah [Reza Pehalvi], opportunities for producing weapons cooperatively in Pakistan, Iran and Turkey were examined, but no concrete plan was implemented. All Islamic countries depend on Western countries and the USSR for their defense needs. Some small weapons, however, are being manufactured in Pakistan and Turkey. Indonesia is producing helicopters and light planes. Several Arab countries started producing weapons cooperatively in Egypt after the October 1973 war, but this production was stopped when Egypt was expelled from the Arab League after the 1979 Camp David agreement. The demand for defense production since then has rapidly increased because of the Soviet aggression in Afghanistan and the Israeli attack on Lebanon. Our dependence on Western countries and the Soviet Union for weapons has dramatically increased.

Industrialized nations not only have made great strides in the production of weapons, they are using the sale of these weapons as a strategy for increasing their powers and improving their economies. They demand high prices for their modern weapons and impose strict rules. At their whim, they can stop the shipment of spare parts and ammunition. Pakistan had this deadly experience in September 1965 and then again in December 1971 when the United States stopped shipping spare parts along with weapons. Egypt and other countries dependent on the USSR have faced similar experiences. First, they were provided only a bare minimum of weapons and later, during the war with Israel, the USSR purposely delayed the shipment of badly needed weapons. What is worse, countries like Saudi Arabia, which are considered friends of the United States, face great difficulties in obtaining weapons even though they are willing to pay in advance.

These facts clearly indicate that the production of weapons is crucial to us. Individually, these countries are not capable of such production because of their limited economic and technical resources. We can accomplish this goal through cooperation, however, so that the proposal made by Pakistan's defense minister is very important and timely for Islamic countries. Only Pakistan, Turkey, Egypt and, to an extent, Indonesia, are technically capable of defense production. If these countries receive capital from affluent Islamic countries, their mutual cooperation can lay the foundation for self-reliance in defense. This need has also been felt at the Islamic Conference level. A strong defense is not needed by Pakistan alone; it is a prime need of all countries. The delay in implementing this cooperative effort will not only weaken the defenses of these countries but also spoil their dream of impressing the greatness of Islam on the world. Wealthy countries invite invaders and poor countries with technical know-how cannot become strong because of the lack of capital. Thus Israel, a country smaller than a mango's pit, is challenging all Arab countries because it has support from the United States. Other Islamic countries can neither help them nor improve their own defenses. The unity of Islamic countries is important, but their cooperation in the area of defense production can make them invincible.

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HIGHWAY BOARD PROPOSES LEVY ON GASOLINE

Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 13 Jan 84 p 8

[Article by Saeed Qureshi]

[Text]

ISLAMABAD, Jan. 12: The National Highway Board has proposed a levy of 10 paisas per litre on gasoline and diesel from July 1 this year in order to generate Rs. 1586 million during the Sixth Plan. The amount would be utilised for renovating National Highways and provincial roads.

The Board has also submitted a plan to the Government for enhancing the registration tax on trucks to a minimum of Rs.6000 and on truck trailers to Rs.8,000. At present the registration fee is being charged at the rate of Rs. 2,828 per truck.

A study of the Highway Board already submitted to the Government holds bad quality roads responsible for economic losses of over Rs. 2500 million a year. This amount is said to be in addition to Rs. 1,000 million spent on occasional imports of tyres, fuel and spare parts.

The paper considers the present system of financing as totally inadequate to meet the growing load on the national highways, especially the N-5.

The study points out that the 'country's dependence on N-5, or the Grand Trunk Road, could lead to grave consequences in case of any disruption caused by war or other crises'. Thirty-seven per cent

of all goods traffic on the highways flows along the N-5. The funds accruing from increased registration fee would be in the vicinity of Rs.840 million and would be reserved for the rehabilitation of provincial roads. The road building and rehabilitation during the Sixth Five Year Plan will be done with the support of the private sector which will be offered attractive incentives for participation. The Bankers Equity has reportedly agreed to raise Rs.4500 million for local financing by selling the National Highway Bonds. The entrepreneurs are however willing to arrange Rs.2500 million for the bonds at an interest rate of 5 per cent.

The report attributes 95 per cent damage to roads to the high axle trucks, including the Afghan and NLC trucks. It points out that while the NLC trucks are operating commercially they are exempt from all taxes.

While recommending a thorough revision of the financing pattern, the Highway authorities have highlighted the big gap between the revenues earned and the investment made on the maintenance and construction of new roads. It may be noted that the Federal revenues on account of taxes from roads are over four billion rupees while the investment made in the past six years comes to only Rs.400 million.

LETTER WRITER EXPRESSES DISGUST OVER BAD LIVING CONDITIONS

Lahore THE PAKISTAN TIMES in English 13 Jan 84 p 6

[Text] I am a peon and my ideas are, therefore, perhaps unworthy of publication in your most esteemed newspaper. Since I am totally illiterate I have no choice but to ask a Sahib to render my views in English so that you don't have to bother with idiomatic translation. I talk of no great matter. I am neither talking of the Planning Commission nor of the fulminations of our politicians. The newspapers are full of Pir Sahib of Pagara and even focus attention on a Press conference by Hanif Ramay. Equally our newspapers are full of Punjab Council proceedings, Majlis-i-Shoora debates, Ministerial statements and other exhortations at various levels to pursue the right path and do everything possible for the great glory of Islam.

No, Sir, since I am only a peon, it is not for me to express an opinion on matters of high policy. I am not asking for elections and I care not for any controversy about the "Sivasi Dhancha". Whether President Zia stays on by referendum or proportional representation or by election through the four provincial assemblies, as suggested by "The International Herald Tribune", I am not really pushed about it.

I am, I must repeat, a small-timer. I am only a peon. I don't look at the moon for romance nor at the sky for comfort. Indeed I look at the sky only when it is about to rain. I get only second-hand reports of the Multan jalsa and I understand very little about the onion spiral or about the cotton crisis. I don't understand stock exchange quotations and why the market is bearish or bullish.

Since I am only a peon I am not ashamed to talk of something very base, something that would not even enter the conversation in polite society. I am talking of the gutter outside my house. I am talking of the gutters outside the houses of my neighbours.

Surely you don't want to hear about gutters. Nobody wants to hear about gutters. But this gutter is my whole life. This gutter has overflowed and created a crisis. You hear the word crisis so often that it perhaps doesn't mean anything to you any more.

You perhaps have no idea what it means to have an over-flowing gutter outside your house. How would the President like an overflowing gutter outside the presidency? How would the Governor like one outside the Governor's House? How would the Mayor like one outside his home? I bet a lot of heads would roll if an important gutter were to overflow. When my gutter overflows, only my head goes into a spin.

Just in case you were interested in my gutter, I live in Sector 6/C-2 in the Township Scheme. I have put all my lifeblood into building a home here. There are another 30-35 houses in the vicinity. The gutters outside these houses are not linked to sewerage. So our houses float in stench and cess-pool and we have to wade through knee-deep gutter spill. The floors of our houses have begun to sag.

I have to take a bath and wash my clothes. My kids have to go to school. I, too, am interested in the quality of life which one keeps hearing about. I am sick to my stomach. We have petitioned newspapers to study our plight. We have pleaded with the XEN of the Housing and Physical Planning Department. I have even pleaded privately with my own Sahib who is a very important man to intervene. Nothing has helped.

No, Sir, I am not interested in democracy and elections. My gutter is my democracy. Will you kindly print this as the top letter to tell the world that I prize my gutter higher than elections and democracy? Will anyone come to my rescue? --GHULAM MOHAMMAD, House No. 428, Sector 6/C-2, Lahore Township Scheme, Lahore.

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PROVINCIAL FEUDING OVER RIVER WATER DEPLORED

Lahore NAWA-I-WAQT in Urdu 23 Jan 84 p 11

[Article by Prof Mohammad Saleem: "Route Permit for the River Sind"]

[Text] Mr Hanif Rai, chairman of the defunct Masavat Party, commenting on the news that there is a possibility that inter-provincial differences over the distribution of river waters can be resolved, expressed hope that a fair and just decision will be made. He said that since it is a very serious and important problem, representatives from the four provinces should be involved in negotiations. The martial law government, however, will use its own methodology and it is hoped that no province will suffer any injustice and the valid needs of all will be given consideration.

The problem of river waters has been in limbo for many years and the blame lies with the leaders who cause delays in the name of protecting the rights of provinces. Now, by the grace of God, the solution is almost here because these so-called proponents of rights of provinces have either disappeared or have become ineffective. If those people were still in power, no one would have dared to solve this problem.

Hanif Rai has expressed a desire to involve representatives of various provinces in solving this crucial problem. We wish that could happen, but history tells us that this problem was never solved, even when we had representative government. Some people even claim that this problem was caused by these "representative" governments and worsened by their efforts. Hanif Rai himself was a leader in a representative government. What did he achieve during his rule? Other state governments also subscribed to the same ideology at that time. Had these people really tried, this problem would have been solved in no time. Instead, the problem was even more aggravated during his time. Now that a solution to this problem is in sight, such people begin to sing their age-old tune of provincial rights. The atmosphere is very conducive to the topic of provincial rights. Jam-e Sadiq Ali has already threatened to appeal to the World Bank to stop money to Pakistan for building Kala Bagh Dam. He believes that Sind will become a desert if this dam is completed. This is the same Jam Sahib who was famous for selling plots during his tenure as a minister. Even now, several people possess allotment letters signed by Jam Sahib. All you have to do is fill in your name in the space provided for the name of allottee and you own a plot! This Jam Sahib is stationed

in London now and is reminiscing about the good old days when he was the king of Sind. His sense of deprivation can only be relieved if he is given the route permit for the Sind River so he can decide which way it should flow, where to dam it, how much water to sell and how much water to throw in the ocean. And he should not be accountable to anyone.

Many people still remember the remarks of a minister serving during the unfortunate era of Mr Jam Sahib. He had said that the Sind belonged to them and they had the right to use its waters any way they desired. He had become very angry when someone said that he could not use all the water and should have no objection to other people using the surplus waters and had responded that he would sell what he wanted to and throw in the ocean what was left. Nobody, according to him, had the right to question him.

During that period, provincial differences were aggravated. The prime minister at that time did not address the nation as "Pakistanis" but as "Punjabis", "Sindis", "Baluchis" and "Pathans." It seemed that there was no Pakistan but a collection of some provinces. Thank God, that time is gone, otherwise provincialism would have continued. All provinces would have been fighting with each other. There would have been news stories about Punjab stopping the water of its rivers on its border, Sind stopping goods imported by Sarhad at Karachi and Baluchistan banning the export of gasoline to other provinces.

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CASE FOR INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPERS EXPLAINED, SUPPORTED

Lahore NAWA-I-WAQT in Urdu 24 Jan 84 p 3

[Editorial: "Newspapers and Government Standards"]

[Text] Raja Zafar-ul Haq, federal minister of information, recently announced that contracts for government advertisements will be awarded according to the standards of the newspapers and not their circulation. At first glance, this seems to be a good idea, since with an ideology like ours we need to focus on the standards of our newspapers. In this country based on Islamic ideology, our newspapers should help to preserve Islamic ideals, encourage Islamic pride, inform people about national policies and important decisions, and help people express their opinions. Unfortunately, a major segment of our national press was put under government control when martial law was first enacted during the late Ayub Khan's regime. Later, this portion of the press was called the National Press Trust [NPT]. At that time, it was announced that the main purpose of the NPT was to establish journalistic standards along the lines of the London TIMES. There is no doubt, however, that once newspapers are controlled by government, the question of having a free press does not even arise. The rulers, regardless of their intentions, consider only newspapers controlled by NPT to be up to par. Their own standard becomes the standard for all journalists.

Only two or three newspapers out of the scores published in English, Urdu and regional languages can be considered independent. The idea of modeling after the London TIMES and the GUARDIAN is long gone. The proprietors of these newspapers have all but become employees of the Ministry of Information and attend its meetings as regularly as do the officers of government news agencies, radio, television and public information departments. National banks and the government treasury advance loans to these newspapers to make up their financial losses. Independent newspapers pay import duties on their presses, whereas these government newspapers are exempt. The government newspapers also get preferred treatments compared with the independent newspapers when it comes to the awarding of advertising contracts. The so-called standards mentioned in this announcement are not considered at all.

It is believed that the president is advised to control outspoken and courageous newspapers the same as he controls the justice system, the lawyers and the politicians. The time is ripe for such action since the justice

system and lawyers have bowed down as have the politicians. The president, however, has shown remarkable patience with journalists for the past 6 or 6 1/2 years and has often declared that our country needs national newspapers. We hope that he will decide to have a free press as well as a free justice system and free lawmakers. We also hope that he will respect the patriotism of the newspapers who dare to express their opinion at any cost. Only such journalism is going to help our country. The newspapers whose policy is only to please government, like the court jesters of earlier times, will only harm the government, since they build the illusion of all being well and keep the leaders ignorant of reality and problems.

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BRIEFS

PPP DENIES SECRET DEAL--KARACHI, Jan 12--The Pakistan Peoples Party sources have ruled out all rumours afloat regarding a secret deal with the government for the release and departure of Benazir aborad. The sources believed that the government was afraid to take any responsibility in case the ailment of Miss Benazir took a turn for the worse. They also certified as her own the statement issued to the press in her name and said that all rumours about its being fake were aimed at diverting the attention of the people. The sources were of the view that so long Begum Bhutto and Miss Benazir were alive there was no possibility of disunity within the ranks of the party "Merely their absence from the country cannot render them ineffective so far as the party and the workers are concerned" the sources added. They also reiterated the stand and commitment of the party with the four-point demand of the MRD." The party is not prepared to budge an inch from these four points" the sources assured. [Text] [Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 13 Jan 84 p 1]

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